Harshit Rana ruled out of IPL

P19

DH on Saturday

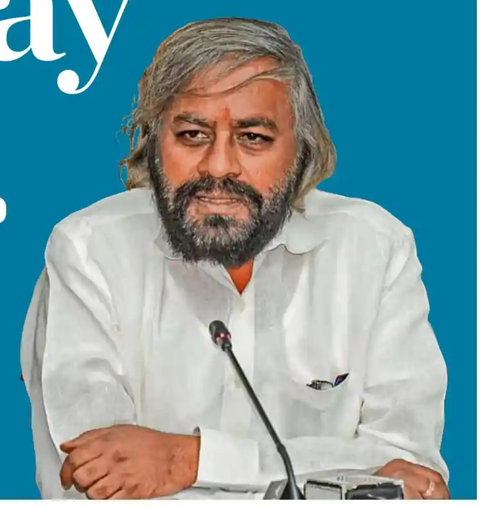
DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Probe ordered into '25 fires' in 24 hrs at Kudremukh

Minister Khandre seeks report in seven days

P5



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With this crackdown, sources in the government said that the number of websites or apps blocked for illegal activities so far have risen to 8,400 after the passage of the Online Gaming Act.

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, was passed by Parliament on August 21, 2025.

The Gaming Act comprehensively prohibits all forms of online money games, be it games of chance, games of skill, or any combination. It also prohibits the advertising, promotion and facilitation of such games, as well as the processing of related financial transactions through banks or payment systems.

The Act further empowers authorities to block access to unlawful platforms under the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

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Under this, offering online money games or facilitating financial transactions for such online money games may attract imprisonment of up to three years or a fine up to Rs 1 crore, or both.

Moreover, a second or subsequent conviction for offering or facilitating online money games attracts a minimum of three years of imprisonment (may extend up to five years), and a fine of minimum Rs 1 crore (may extend up to Rs 2 crore).

Advertising such online money games is punishable with imprisonment of up to two years or a fine up to Rs 50 lakh or both. Subsequent conviction for advertising such online money games involves more severe consequences.

Besides this, the Gaming Act also provides for the recognition and promotion of e-sports and online social games, the establishment of the Online Gaming Authority of India, a transparent registration mechanism for online games, a grievance-redressal system for users, and safeguards against prohibited online money games and associated harms.

The national-level Online Gaming Authority will be responsible for classifying and registering permissible games, determining whether a game constitutes a money game, issuing codes of practice, and addressing public grievances.

NASA hauls its repaired moon rocket from hangar

Spacecraft moved to pad for early April launch

CAPE CANAVERAL, AP

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"It's a test flight, and it is not without risk, but our team and our hardware are ready," Lori Glaze, the acting associate administrator for NASA's Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate had earlier said. Pending completion of the remaining work required to prepare for flight, she said, "we are on track for a launch as early as April 1. And we are working toward that date."

Artemis II is expected to loop a crew of four astronauts around the far side of the moon without landing on the lunar surface and bring them back to Earth on a mission that will take about 10 days. Like its predecessor, Artemis I, the mission will lift off on a giant rocket called the Space Launch System. Future NASA missions, planned for 2028, will attempt to return astronauts to the moon's surface.

Everyone's at risk

Anaemia does not affect all groups equally. Women remain the most vulnerable - over 50% of Indian women in reproductive age are anaemic. This is mainly due to excessive blood loss during menstruation or general malnutrition from childhood.

Children and adolescents are equally at risk, with studies showing prevalence as high as 58% among young children. Rapid growth, menstrual health and nutritional gaps make these groups particularly susceptible.

The malnutrition aspect is seen even in higher economic strata owing to misguided dietary preferences. Even men, often overlooked in this conversation, show rising trends. The pattern reveals a deeper issue - anaemia is not just a medical condition, but a reflection of nutrition, gender dynamics and lifestyle realities across society.

Beating anaemia: Awareness is the key

Invariably you consult a doctor when that constant fatigue just doesn't go away and people start telling you, "you're looking pale". Invariably it's a case of anaemia. Anaemia, however, is more than just fatigue - it is a condition where the body lacks enough healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen efficiently.

In India, it has become a public health crisis. Nearly half of the population is affected by it, with the national prevalence estimated at around 49.90%. What makes anaemia particularly dangerous is it rarely becomes obvious. Many people with anaemia dismiss early signs as routine tiredness.

Anaemia can occur in both men and women of all ages. Even babies are not spared of its impact. It is caused due to many reasons, yet, at the same time, some easy lifestyle and dietary changes can help you overcome it. It is lack of awareness and not understanding its significance that lead to many health issues. Over time, it erodes your productivity, immunity and quality of life.

Eating right helps beat anaemia

At its core, anaemia is all about imbalance between what the body needs and what it receives. Think of it as a deficit. Poor nutrition remains the leading cause, particularly diets low in iron, Vitamin B12 and folate. Frequent reliance on fast food or refined foods leads to low nutrition for the body.

Blood loss through menstruation or medical conditions add to the burden, compounding matters. Chronic illnesses interfere with red blood cell production, leading to anaemia. In India, the challenge is compounded by low iron absorption - estimated at just 6–12% from typical diets. This means even when nutritious food is consumed, the body may not fully benefit from it.

Addressing anaemia, therefore, is not just about eating more, but eating right and absorbing better. Vitamin C-rich foods should be a part of your daily diet. Vitamin C converts iron into a more absorbable form.

!

ENERGY LEVELS FADING OUT EVERYDAY?

ANAEMIA CAN MAKE YOU THAT WAY!

FLIP THE PAGE TO FLIP YOUR ENERGY LEVELS.

Routine screening is a must

While identifying symptoms early does go a long way in timely treatment, diagnosis begins simply with a blood test measuring haemoglobin levels. But identifying anaemia is only the first step. Understanding its type requires further evaluation by specialists. Investigation for levels of iron and vitamins help arrive at a diagnosis.

Modern diagnostics facilitate early detection, often before severe symptoms appear. Yet, awareness remains low, and many seek help only when fatigue becomes debilitating or the paleness becomes a talking point with others who observe it.

The key lies in proactive health checks. In a country where anaemia is widespread, routine screening should not be optional - it should be a norm.

Many causes of anaemia

Anaemia is a spectrum of haemoglobin-related disorders. Iron-deficiency anaemia remains the most common, but deficiencies in Vitamin B12 and folate are equally significant. Genetic forms such as Sickle Cell Anaemia and severe conditions such as Aplastic Anaemia add to its complexity. Studies suggest that while iron deficiency dominates, nutritional anaemia accounts for over 60% of cases, often involving multiple deficiencies rather than a single cause.

This complex nature means anaemia cannot be treated with a one-size-fits-all approach. It requires careful diagnosis and a deeper understanding of what the body truly lacks. So, you need to initiate a few measures to overcome it.

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Listen to your body

Anaemia always comes unannounced. It creeps in through fatigue that just doesn't go away, breathlessness even after minor exertion, pale skin, giddiness or frequent headaches. These symptoms are often brushed aside as stress or overwork, especially in urban lifestyles. Over time, however, the body begins to signal deeper distress - rapid heartbeat, dizziness and reduced stamina.

The challenge lies in perception and proper knowledge about what causes it and how to overcome it. What feels 'normal' may actually be a warning. Early recognition can prevent long-term complications, making it essential to listen to the body rather than 'normalise' persistent exhaustion.

Treatment beyond iron tablets

Treatment of anaemia goes far beyond prescribing iron supplements. While iron deficiency is common, not all forms of anaemia respond to iron alone. In fact, specialists caution against self-medication, as incorrect supplementation can mask underlying conditions. Effective treatment combines targeted supplementation, dietary changes and addressing the root causes such as chronic disease or absorption issues. Severe cases may require transfusions.

The goal is not just correction, but restoration - bringing the body back to a state of balance where energy, immunity and vitality are sustained. This is possible by including specific foods, supplements, exposure to sunlight, controlling menstrual bleeding, taking certain precautions and more. People with Vitamin B12 absorption issues may require permanent medical aid.

Healthy habits make a difference

Anaemia can best be dealt with through prevention. It begins at the dining table. A balanced and varied diet rich in iron, supported by Vitamin C for better absorption, is essential. Yet, the challenge is deeper than what is seen on the periphery. India's dietary patterns often lack diversity, and iron intake alone is not enough. Dislike for fruits and vegetables, over reliance on refined foods and carbs, lack of Vitamin B12 along with other lifestyle habits aggravates the problem.

With anaemia affecting hundreds of millions globally, including 500 million women worldwide, prevention requires both awareness and action at the personal and community levels. Regular health check-ups even at school and college, improved nutrition education and conscious food choices can make a significant difference. Ultimately, small, consistent habits hold the power to reverse a large, silent epidemic.

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start taking care of your energy,
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IRON SHAKTI SALT
IODIZED
25% DAILY IRON*
NO CHANGE IN TASTE
STAY ACTIVE WITH VISIBLE IRON BOOSTERS
Creative Visualisation
*Claim of 25% daily requirement: Basis one 5g teaspoon of Aashirvaad Iron Shakti Salt as per RDA for Indian Men(Sedentary), ICMR 2020. WHO has recommended the daily salt intake to be 5g per day as part of a healthy diversified balanced diet.

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Bengaluru Saturday, March 21, 2026 Pages 32 Vol 79 No 79 ₹8

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DH on Saturday

DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Action movie star Chuck Norris dies at 86

P14

Industrial diesel price up by 25%, may fuel inflation

Bulk diesel purchasers to be hit; premium petrol rate goes up

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, public-sector oil marketing companies in India on Friday started a selective price hike, with premium petrol becoming costlier by up to Rs 2.35 per litre and diesel used for industrial purposes witnessing a steep 25% jump in rate. The move could make products costlier, leading to higher inflationary pressure.

In Delhi, the price of one litre of diesel sold for industrial uses like manufacturing, logistics and power generation was hiked to Rs 109.59 from earlier rate of Rs 87.67, an increase of Rs 21.92 per litre or over 25%.

However, the price of diesel sold to retail customers like car, bus and truck users remains unchanged. In Delhi, retail users will continue to get normal diesel at Rs 87.67 a litre.

Diesel is used as a key source of energy by various industrial sectors, including manufacturing, logistics and power generation. The increase in cost of production due to higher diesel prices is likely to result in a jump in prices down the supply chain, impacting the pocket of common people.

Inflation has increased sharply in recent months. Retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index rose to 10-month high of 3.21% in February, while wholesale price inflation jumped to 11-month high of 2.13%, as per the latest official data.

Public-sector oil marketing companies like Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) also announced up to Rs 2.35 per litre increase in the price of premium or high-grade petrol.

Price of IOCL's XP95, BPCL's Speed and HPCL's Power has been increased in the range of Rs 2.09 to Rs 2.35 per litre.

Oil retailers sell premium petrol under different branding and varying rates. However, the price of normal petrol in Delhi remains unchanged at Rs 94.77 per litre.

"There is no increase in the price of normal petrol. There is some increase only in the premium category," said Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

▸ Fuel, Page 6

PRICE HIKE

Diesel for industries from ₹87.67 to ₹109.59

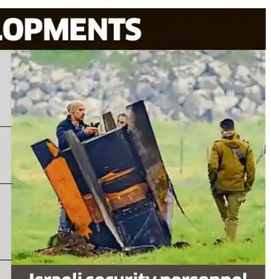
Premium petrol: up to ₹2.35/litre

No change in the normal petrol and retail diesel price

WEST ASIA DEVELOPMENTS

Trump brands NATO allies "cowards" for not heeding his demand for military assistance

- Crude prices slip after US and Israeli leaders said Israel won't target any more of Tehran's energy infra
- Israel strikes Syrian army camps
- US, Israel strike 16 Iranian cargo vessels in ports on Persian Gulf
- Drone attacks hit Kuwait's Mina Al-Ahmadi oil refinery



Israeli security personnel stand near a partly buried rocket in Golan Heights. AFP

Will target enemies across world: Iran

Tehran warned Friday that "parks, recreational areas and tourist destinations" worldwide won't be safe for its enemies, even as Iran fired on Israel and energy sites in neighbouring Gulf Arab states, including a refinery in Kuwait. Page 14

2 Indian tankers get ready

Two Indian-flagged LPG tankers are preparing to sail through the Strait of Hormuz in coming days, Reuters reported. The tankers, currently anchored near Sharjah in the Persian Gulf, broadcast that they were preparing for a voyage.

No vending on roads, footpaths: GBA plans policy

Aims to keep city roads pedestrian-friendly

BENGALURU, DHNS

Street vendors are likely to be barred from undertaking commercial activities on arterial and sub-arterial roads in Bengaluru, with the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) planning to formulate a new footpath policy for the city.

The decision was made at the first executive committee meeting of the GBA, chaired by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, on Friday. The meeting also decided to resume towing of vehicles parked in unauthorised places.

Speaking to reporters, Shivakumar said the GBA will create designated vending zones on certain roads to ensure footpaths are free from encroachments.

"Citizens are struggling to move on footpaths. We will formulate a policy keeping in mind the interest of pedestrians and street vendors. All the MLAs have expressed their consensus on this," the deputy CM said after holding a separate meeting with legislators of Bengaluru.

Around 60,000 street vendors are registered with the GBA.

"About half of them have applied for push carts under GBA's welfare programme. Going forward, only those with identity cards will be allowed to do business. We will not allow push carts to be left on the road. Vendors must take it home," Shivakumar said.

On unauthorised parking, he said each corporation will hire two vehicles for towing of vehicles. "We will tow the vehicles parked in no-parking areas," he said.

Earlier, the GBA had proposed a penalty of Rs 650 for unauthorised parking of two-wheelers and Rs 1,000 for cars.

During the meeting, the MLAs also urged the GBA to clear old and abandoned vehicles parked on roads.

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HDFC Bank fires 3 senior officials

Days after the resignation of HDFC Bank chairman Atanu Chakraborty citing ethical concerns, the bank has terminated the services of three employees for gaps in client onboarding at its DIFC branch.

Core sectors' growth slows to 3-month low

Production growth in eight core infrastructure sectors slowed to a three-month low of 2.3% in February due to a contraction in the output of crude oil, natural gas, and refinery products, according to the government data. P 15

A home for the homeless

An account of life inside a shelter for the abandoned, ill, and forgotten

According to the 2011 Census, about 9.3 lakh people were homeless in urban India. This week's *Saturday Story* takes you inside a shelter in Bengaluru that houses people who have no families, those abandoned by their children, and those whose families cannot afford to care for them at home but continue to visit. It explores how many of them ended up on the margins. Some were found alone, disoriented, and with open wounds at the time of rescue. Yet, it is striking that some destitute individuals prefer life on the streets over a shelter with round-the-clock care and security. Those who do agree to come to these shelters, however, often find friendship, purpose, and hope.

The SATURDAY STORY

Full story, Page 17

DH greets its readers on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr

Trainee vet dies in hippo attack at Shivamogga zoo

HUBBALLI, DHNS: A 27-year-old trainee wildlife veterinarian succumbed to her injuries on Friday morning after being attacked by a hippopotamus at the Tyavarekoppa Lion and Tiger Safari near Shivamogga late Thursday night.

Sameeksha Reddy, a native of Bannerghatta in Bengaluru, had entered the hippopotamus enclosure around 10.30 pm to check on the pregnant animal.

Sunil Panwar, Member Secretary of the Zoo Authority of Karnataka, told DH that Sameeksha had administered medicine to a bird around 10.30 pm and, while returning, noticed that the hippopotamus appeared to be in discomfort. She went to check if it had delivered. The hippopotamus charged at her and bit her abdomen, causing severe blood loss.

Details on Page 5

TMC makes 10 pledges in poll manifesto, bets big on welfare, women

KOLKATA, PTI: The Trinamool Congress released its manifesto for the West Bengal polls on Friday, betting big on welfare politics and wooing its formidable women support base with 10 pledges that encompass widening the ambit of existing welfare schemes, stronger healthcare outreach and infrastructure development.

The 10 "pratigyas" (pledges) party supremo Mamata Banerjee announced while unveiling the poll document, includes a Rs 500 hike in the Lakshmir Bhandar scheme for women and the launch of healthcare camps in every block of the state.

Women voters constitute nearly half of the state's electorate.

Details on Page 11

West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee

HC REMARK

'CM has better work than meddling with transfers'

AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

The chief minister has better and more important work to perform than interfering with transfers and postings of government employees, the Karnataka High Court said in a recent judgment.

A division bench comprising Justices D K Singh and T M Nadaf said this while noticing recommendation letters from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) in the transfer of a Bescom engineer.

"We are of the considered view that the transfers and postings of the employees should be left to the administrative departments concerned and the highest authority of the state should not devote his time in such matters nor should he interfere with the transfers and postings of employees working within the government and the government undertakings," the division bench said.

The appeal was filed by an engineer, a physically challenged person appointed in 2020 as an Assistant Engineer at Whitefield unit of Bescom, challenging the single bench order. He had filed petitions between 2022 and 2024 challenging his transfer orders, including a petition requesting a mutual transfer.

While rejecting all his petitions, the single bench had noticed that the court had come across several letters/orders/approvals issued by the CMO, transferring group 'B' or 'C' employees, which reverses the transfer orders issued by the departments concerned.

▸ High Court, Page 6

SC rejects woman's plea against CM, Page 4

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Conquer every terrain with powerful long range of 627 km◊
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with 4WD Dual Motor
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DELETE BLINDSPOTS
540° Surround View Camera≈ L2 ADAS^ & HD Rear View Mirror with DVR£
Avail benefits up to ₹4 00 000°
Avail depreciation benefits up to ₹6 00 000**
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KHT MOTORS
Whitefield: 7506023988; Domlur: 7506024006, Kolar: 9731149668
KROPEX AUTO
Hosur Road: 7506024016, Koramangala: 9167395364, Sarjapur road: 8291202713, Mahadevapura: 8291052641
PRERANA MOTORS
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ADISHAKTI CARS
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CAUVERY MOTORS:
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SREE AUTO
Tumkur: 7506024318,Tiptur: 9619050469, Chitradurga: 9619033465, Kunigal: 8879046819, Chikkaballapur: 9167082428, Chintamani: 8291927028
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WHOSE ROAD IS IT ANYWAY?

Bengaluru's tunnel road: A costly bet on toll, land and time

The contract amount considers only the toll amount and not the income from real estate and other sources that the bidder will get, say critics

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government has proposed an ambitious 16.74-km tunnel road between Hebbal and Central Silk Board in an attempt to increase the average speed of vehicles from 15 km/hour to 30 km/hour.

However, beneath the promise of providing a faster commute lies a complex financial structure in which the project depends heavily on public subsidies, long-term toll extraction, and the monetisation of the city's five most valuable land parcels.

With an estimated cost of Rs 17,698 crore, the project is being executed under a modified build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT) model.

Initially, the government chose the hybrid annuity model (HAM), under which the government funds 40% of the cost upfront, and the rest in instalments, but the idea was dropped during the conceptual stage after only one company showed interest in the project.

On the other hand, half a dozen companies favoured the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model, but the government was not keen to fund the project entirely.

Now, under a modified BOOT arrangement, the government will provide 40% of the project cost — approximately Rs 7,079 crore — as viability gap funding (VGF), while the remaining 60% will be borne by the private concessionaire. VGF is a grant designed to support capital-intensive public-private partnership (PPP) infrastructure projects that are economically essential but commercially unviable.

In addition to VGF, the government or the project implementing agency — Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Ltd (B-SMILE) — will bear the costs and responsibility of acquiring land and shifting of utilities.

On its part, the concessionaire is expected to invest over Rs 10,600 crore over four years of the construction phase and recover the investment through a mix of revenues, including toll, commercial development rights, and other ancillary streams. The tender framework expects the concessionaire to raise up to 70% of Rs 10,600 crore as loans from the banks.

Selection of bidders

As per the tender documents, the selection of the concessionaire is based on the lowest Total Concession Value (TCV) quoted. TCV means the revenue the concessionaire expects to earn from tolls over the life of the project. The one who quotes the lowest wins.

To make the project attractive to bidders, the government has excluded lucrative ancillary revenues, such as real estate development at the city's five landmark sites, parking fees, and advertising rights.

In July last year, B-SMILE floated the tenders for the project. After three extensions, the tender saw participation of four bidders.

During the technical evaluation, B-SMILE disqualified two bidders: One, Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL), on the grounds that its joint venture (JV) partner, TLS Geetha Kameshwari, did not meet the technical criteria. Second, infrastructure major Dilip Buildcon was disqualified because tender clause 2.2.1(G) barred entities with a history of bridge or flyover collapses.

In the end, two companies made it to the finals.

Adani Enterprises — which had quoted a total concession value of Rs 22,267 crore for both packages — emerged as the lowest bidder. In the race, Vishwa Samudra Engineering Pvt Ltd emerged as the second-lowest, quoting a total of Rs 25,474 crore for both packages.

Critics say that this essentially means either B-SMILE underestimated the toll-collection capability or the bids were not truly competitive.

It can be noted that Vishwa Samudra's technical qualification relied solely on the experience of Navayuga Engineering Company Limited (NECL), a company closely related to the former. However, NECL was the contractor of the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel in Uttarakhand, which saw a major accident in 2023. If B-SMILE had taken this into consideration, Adani would have been the sole bidder for the project.

Double trouble

Adani's bid, although the lowest, stands several times higher than what the B-SMILE had anticipated. While B-SMILE's share of investment will remain at 40% of the project cost, the concession period is likely to extend beyond 30 years, possibly up to 40 years, given the higher bidding price.

An extended concession period means the continued collection of toll charges and rights over five real estate parcels in prime areas, among other things.

While B-SMILE did not disclose its TCV estimates in the tender documents, a calculation of projected annual toll revenue — as mentioned in the concession framework presented in the Final DPR — indicates that the concessionaire could earn close to Rs 11,000 crore in toll revenue over thirty years.

For instance, the B-SMILE estimates toll revenue of Rs 716 crore for Package 1 and Rs 672 crore for Package 2 in 2031. These revenues are assumed to grow significantly over time, reaching nearly Rs 2,934 crore and Rs 2,722 crore per year by the late 2050s.

To account for inflation, the concession framework applies a discount rate of around 9.1% to future earnings. In effect, the toll revenues over the 30-year concession period — across two packages — amount to Rs 85,000 crore in absolute terms, and in TCV terms (i.e., at a discounted rate), they stand at around Rs 11,000 crore.

With Adani quoting Rs 22,267 crore, which is more than twice the B-SMILE's estimate of Rs 11,000 crore (two packages combined), the concession period is expected to continue until the discounted toll revenue collected by the concessionnaire equals the quoted TCV. This also means the project ends in 30 years if toll revenue is strong, and the concession period can extend to 40 years if toll revenue falls short.

Key exclusion

One of the most consequential aspects of the modified BOOT model is what it leaves out. The total concession value explicitly excludes ancillary revenues, even though the concessionaire is entitled to them.

These include commercial development at five prime locations, advertising and naming rights, and parking and access fees. Official estimates indicate that the concessionaire will earn a total of Rs 300 crore every year from ancillary revenue, including Rs 80 crore from commercial development at intermediate stations. But this appears conservative.

With a Floor Space Index (FSI) of 5, each site — such as Palace Grounds, St John's Hospital road, Lalbagh, Hebbal and Racecourse — could support a minimum of 15 floors, excluding five floors in the basement. Annual revenues could exceed Rs 500 crore, translating into nearly Rs 25,000 crore in Net Present Value (NPV) terms over the concession period. Yet, this entire revenue stream is excluded from TCV.

In Bengaluru, an FSI of 5 — which requires amendment to the revised master plan (RMP) — is generous. Now, a maximum of 3.25 FSI is provided on properties adjoining 100-foot roads. The last major attempt to raise the FSI to 4 along the Namma Metro corridor was withdrawn owing to public backlash against densifying the neighbourhoods.

Experts termed the plan "a perverse mobility solution", stating that the TCV has taken into account partial revenue streams, but the more lucrative real estate revenue base — which generates predictable profits — is kept out.

"TCV does not capture the full financial picture. In effect, the metric used to select the concessionaire is misaligned with the project's total economic value. The government stands to lose," said independent mobility expert Satya Arikutharam.

Given that TCV excludes real estate revenues, Arikutharam said the government should have easily foreseen that the bidders would aim to maximise the concession period so as to retain control over the high-value real estate revenues. "The quoted TCV reflects this priority, i.e. the lowest bidder's TCV cannot be recovered even in 40 years," he said.

He also questioned the priorities. "By allowing real estate development in five places that are currently in the green zone, the government is adding additional traffic to the road network. Each site could host developments exceeding 2,50,000 sq ft. This may generate up to 2.5 lakh additional trips daily, compared to 1.25 lakh passenger car units expected to use the tunnel road," he estimated. He added that the tunnel road is more of a real estate project than a mobility solution.

Feedback:
pointblank@ deccanherald.co.in

Conceptual layout of the intermediate station for the tunnel road in Hebbal. IMAGE CREDIT: TUNNEL ROAD DPR

Lalbagh may see a huge construction at the intermediate station, going by documents. DH FILE PHOTO

Six-lane North-South tunnel road project (16.74-km)

Project	Total cost	Govt share	Private investment
Package 1 (Hebbal near Esteem mall jn to Seshadri road, Freedom Park)	Rs 8,770 cr	Rs 3,508 cr	Rs 5,262 cr
Package 2 (Seshadri road to Silk Board junction)	Rs 8,928 cr	Rs 3,571 cr	Rs 5357 cr
Total	Rs 17,698 cr	Rs 7,079 cr	Rs 10,619 cr

Rs 800 crore — Towards acquisition of land

Rs 150 crore — Towards shifting of utilities

Rs 9,303.66 crore — B-SMILE will raise a loan of **Rs 9,303.66** from HUDCO at an interest rate of **8.95%** towards the project which includes the cost of land acquisition, **40%** subsidy and shifting of utilities. The state government will stand as a guarantor.

Returns for the concessionaire

- Toll charges for a period of 30 years (extendable by 10 more years)
- Commercial development (5+G+15 floors) in five intermodal hubs such as Lalbagh, Racecourse, Palace Grounds, Madiwala (St John's road) and Hebbal
- Advertisement and branding rights
- Parking and retail spaces

Bids received* (Figures in Rs crore)

Bidders	Package 1	Package 2	Total
Adani	10,867	11,400	22,267
Vishwa Samudra	12,432	13,042	25,474

*Sources

METRO

Finance associate booked for misappropriating Rs 34 lakh

BENGALURU, DHNS: A finance associate has been booked for allegedly misappropriating over Rs 34 lakh from a private company located on St Mark's Road.

A senior police officer from Cubbon Park police station said that Kiran Lewis, the complainant, stated that the accused, Prabhhu Unnikrishanan (30), was working as an administrator and facility manager at Purplelab Search Private Limited, which is into consultancy. He was appointed as a finance associate in 2021 and continued in the role till 2025.

During an internal audit conducted in September 2025 by the company's finance manager, discrepancies emerged in the accounts. The audit initially reportedly revealed that the accused had transferred Rs 45.82 lakh from the company's accounts. Police said that after his termination, the accused returned Rs 8.95 lakh and Rs 1.05 lakh in two instalments during November and December to the company's accounts. However, he allegedly failed to repay the remaining Rs 34.45 lakh and has been evading further payments.

When questioned, the accused allegedly claimed the amount was towards salary and shares. However, he failed to provide a satisfactory explanation. Following this, he was dismissed from service on October 23, 2025.

The accused, despite knowing that the funds belonged to the company, dishonestly transferred the money to his personal account with an intent to commit criminal breach of trust and cheating. Cubbon Park police have registered a case and investigations are on, the police officer added.

From roads to lakes, East Bengaluru works under lens

BENGALURU, DHNS

Commissioner of Bengaluru East City Corporation D S Ramesh recently conducted a field inspection in areas such as Horamavu Agara, Banjara Layout, Kalkere Layout, Babusapalya, and Challakere to review road and infrastructure development works, railway underpass works, lake development, waste management, and footpath encroachments.

During the inspection, the Commissioner interacted with representatives of Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) and local residents, and directed officials to take immediate action to resolve the issues raised.

Babusapalya Railway Underpass

The Babusapalya RUB work has been delayed due to land disputes between private parties and the Railway Department. The Commissioner instructed railway officials to ensure that there are no legal stay orders and to immediately resume and complete the pending works at the earliest.

Ongoing development works at Kalkere Lake were inspected. DH PHOTO

Horamavu Agara Lake

A maintenance tender has already been issued for Horamavu Agara Lake. Officials were directed to take up cleaning and maintenance works at the earliest. Local residents requested facilities such as toilets, benches, walkways, lawns, and other amenities. Officials were instructed to prepare estimates for these works and allocate necessary funds in the next budget.

Agara Lake Road work underway

Agara Lake Road, being a low-lying area, faces frequent waterlogging during the monsoon. To address this, road level improvement works have been taken up. Due to a bitumen shortage, asphalting work has been delayed. The Commissioner directed officials to complete asphalting immediately after the hot mix supply becomes available.

Banjara Layout main road

Due to uneven road levels and silted drains, rainwater does not flow properly into drains, causing water stagnation on the road during the monsoon. Officials were instructed to immediately undertake desilting of side drains. A drain construction project of about 500 metres has been planned, and officials were directed to construct a drain on the opposite side of the road as well.

Kalkere Lake development

Ongoing development works at Kalkere Lake were inspected. Since the contract period has expired, officials were instructed to take action against the contractor for the delay. Directions were given to install an information board displaying complete project details at the lake entrance. Damage caused to certain facilities due to BWSSB sewage pipeline issues was noted, and officials were instructed to undertake necessary repairs.

Mechanical sweeping machines

At the Horamavu Underpass, the commissioner inspected the functioning of mechanical sweeping machines and directed officials to prepare a plan to deploy such machines under a three-year contract.

Kristu Jayanti WiCyS chapter earns global recognition

BENGALURU, DHNS: The WiCyS (Women in Cybersecurity) Student Chapter – Kristu Jayanti (Deemed to be University) was awarded the 'International Student Chapter of the Year 2026' award.

The announcement was made in Washington, DC. The award is given for outstanding contributions to building a cybersecurity learning community and encouraging more women to pursue careers in cybersecurity.

The chapter has over 300 members. Its initiatives include WiCyS Study Jams on advanced topics such as blockchain and zero-trust security, as well as an industry mentorship programme connecting students with professionals from leading organisations, including IBM, Oracle and Salesforce, providing valuable exposure to real-world cybersecurity practices.

K'taka Mountaineering Association celebrates 60th anniversary

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka Mountaineering Association is celebrating its 60th anniversary on Sunday at 3.30 pm at Yavanika, Karnataka State Youth Centre, Nrupathunga Road.

The highlight of this year's programmes will be an attempt to scale Mount Everest (29,029 feet) by Santhosh Devarajappa and Prof Dr Chinmayee Thrishulamurthy. They will attempt the climb this spring, during April–May 2026, via the traditional South Col route from Nepal.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda will flag off the Mount Everest expedition on Sunday.

INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT
INCOME TAX ACT, 2025
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1st April 2026
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INCOME TAX ACT
2025
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Simple Law, Empowered Bharat
Towards Viksit Bharat
Through Simplified
Taxation Law
"Today the goal of the country is Viksit Bharat, Sashakt Bharat!
We cannot stop until this dream of a developed India is fulfilled."
- Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

Traffic curbs in place for Ramzan prayers on Mysuru Road today

BENGALURU, DHNS: A large gathering of approximately 15,000 to 20,000 Muslim devotees is expected to participate in Ramzan festival prayers on Saturday. The gathering will take place near a mosque at BB Junction on Mysuru Road and at the BBMP Playground near 7th Cross, 1st Main Road, Chamarajapet.

In view of this, vehicular movement on Mysuru Road will be temporarily restricted, and the following traffic arrangements will be in place: From 8 am, vehicular movement of all types will be prohibited from Tollgate Junction to Town Hall via BB Junction and over the BGS Flyover on Mysuru Road. Vehicular movement will also be prohibited from Town Hall towards Mysuru via the BGS Flyover and BB Junction up to Toll Gate Junction.

Alternative routes

Vehicles coming from Mysuru towards Town Hall are advised to take a left turn at Kimco Junction (under Byatarayanapura Traffic Police limits), proceed via Chord Road, take a right turn at Toll Gate towards Magadi Road, then a right turn at Hunasemara Junction, followed by a left turn at Sirsi Circle, and continue towards Town Hall.

Vehicles coming from Town Hall towards Mysuru: Heavy vehicles shall use the service road beneath the BGS Flyover, take a right turn at Veterinary Junction, and proceed via Goods Shed Road.

Light vehicles shall take a right turn at Sirsi Junction, proceed via JJ Nagar – Tank Bund Road – Binny Mill Junction – Hunasemara – Magadi Road, take a left turn at Toll Gate, and continue via Chord Road towards Mysuru.

Vehicles travelling from Basavanagudi and Chamarajapet towards Majestic are advised to proceed via Chamarajapet 1st Main Road – 5th Cross Road – Mysuru Road – Veterinary Junction – Goods Shed Road.

How long should parks be open? Local MLAs to make a decision

BENGALURU, DHNS

There was a lack of consensus over how long neighbourhood parks should be kept open in Bengaluru during a meeting of MLAs on Friday. While the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had issued an order to keep the parks open from 5 in the morning to 10 at night, some legislators raised objections, stating that the parks are becoming hubs for anti-social activities.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar to seek inputs from MLAs for the budgets to be prepared by five different corporations for the new financial year.

Initially, Shivakumar defended the existing plan of keeping the parks open through the day, stating that it could help people who are unable to visit in the morning or evening hours. It is learnt that some MLAs were not in favour of keeping them open in the afternoon due to security and safety concerns.

Later, the Deputy CM instructed the corporation commissioners to sit with MLAs of their respective jurisdictions to finalise park timings.

Illegal flex

The meeting also saw discussions around the mushrooming illegal flexes and hoardings, including those erected by political leaders. The Deputy CM instructed officials and the police to impose a fine of Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh for each illegal flex.

"The number of flexes, including birthday and greeting banners, has increased. The government has designated certain places for advertising. No hoarding is allowed without permission," he said.

MLAs Byrathi Suresh, Zameer Ahmed Khan, Krishna Byregowda, Dinesh Gundu Rao, R Ashoka, Suresh Kumar, Rizwan Arshad, ST Somashekar, SR Vishwanath, S Muniraju, B Shivanna, Manjula Limbavali, Ravi Subramanya, Uday Garudachar, Munirathna N, A C Srinivas, Satish Reddy, Byrathi Basavaraj, C K Ramamurthy and K Gopalaiah were present. MP P C Mohan also attended the meeting.

After the meeting, Rajajinagar MLA Suresh Kumar said he sought more funds for the Bengaluru West City Corporation, given that it is financially weak. He also requested the corporations to set aside an emergency fund in each ward to address issues that arise suddenly.

"There is also a need to organise redressal camps to resolve the large number of property tax complaints," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao participate in a meeting convened to suggest inputs for the corporation budget.

DH
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THE KARNATAKA STATE CRICKET ASSOCIATION
M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Cubbon Road, Bangalore – 560 001

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Applications are invited from technically qualified and experienced consultants for appointment as Consultant for LED Sports Lighting with DMX Control System at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru and shifting, installation, aiming, testing and commissioning of existing metal halide sports lighting systems at KSCA grounds, Hubballi and Mysuru.

Applicants shall have proven experience in sports lighting consultancy for international cricket stadiums / sports infrastructure, including design review, illumination standards, photometric assessment, control systems and commissioning.

Scope includes: verification of lighting designs, review of lux levels / uniformity / glare control, preparation of estimate, BOQ, technical specifications, tender assistance, technical and financial scrutiny of bids, recommendation of suitable bidders, supervision during installation / commissioning and scrutiny of bills and certification of quality of work.

Consultants with prior experience in stadium sports lighting projects of similar scale will be preferred.

Interested applicants may submit profile, credentials, relevant experience and consultancy charges in sealed cover addressed to Hon. Secretary, KSCA, M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru – 560001.

Last date for receipt of EOI: 30th March 2026.
For details contact: Syamjith, Deputy Manager – Mob: 9844441684
KSCA reserves the right to accept / reject any application without assigning reasons.

For KSCA
Hon. Secretary

FIR registered against apartment association for misappropriation of Rs 1.73 crore

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bagalagunte police have registered an FIR against 18 members of the Princetown Apartment Owners' Association, located at Shettihalli in Jalahalli West, for allegedly misappropriating funds to the tune of Rs 1.73 crore.

According to a complaint filed by resident Nisha Jangra, the association's office-bearers — including the president, secretary and treasurer — allegedly diverted funds collected towards maintenance and other charges during 2023–24 and 2024–25. The money was shown as spent under various heads such as salaries, repairs, water tanker charges, diesel expenses and other operational costs. However, large sums were allegedly transferred to the personal accounts of some members. The complainant also alleged that Rs 11,341 was paid to the police department as a "protection fee", details of which were obtained through RTI.

The accused named in the FIR are Arun Kulkarni (A1), Alex Punnen (A2), Praveen Naryankar (A3), Sandeep Shrivastava (A4), Sharanappa B (A5), Nandini Kulloli (A6), Vinayaka Byahatti (A7), Dundappa S Kumani (A8), Raghavendra Rao (A9), Teena Vannur (A10), Hemamalini (A11), Pallavi Katti (A12), Kavita Shivhare (A13), Bushra Valappil (A14), Reshma Noronha (A15), Vivekananda Hiremath (A16), Sangamesh Doddamane (A17) and Kiran (A18).

Speaking to *DH*, Nisha said she had first filed a complaint on February 1, but police sought supporting documents and carried out a preliminary verification before registering the FIR on March 18. She alleged that association members tried to suppress her when she questioned the use of maintenance funds collected from over 700 flat owners, and even told her that no action would be taken against them as she was not a local resident.

A senior police officer said notices would be issued to the accused seeking explanations, and further action would be taken based on the findings.

Previous case

It may be recalled that Kumbalgodu police in December 2025 registered a case against the Provident Sunworth Apartment Owners' Association over allegations of collecting Rs 3.3 lakh from residents under the pretext of fines for serious offences and allegedly suppressing the matter.

BMTC bus crashes into building in Peenya depot

BENGALURU, DHNS: A BMTC EV bus crashed into a building in Peenya depot after the driver forgot to apply the hand brake, officials said. The incident occurred a little after 6.30 am on Friday at the BMTC bus depot in Peenya 2nd Stage.

According to preliminary information, the driver parked the bus but forgot to apply the handbrake, leaving the vehicle mobile. He got down to sign the register, after which he was to take the bus away.

Within a few seconds, the bus moved ahead and crashed into the building, damaging a few two-wheelers parked nearby. There were no casualties or injuries.

The building also suffered structural damage, including damage to the windows and walls, due to the crash.

"It is a case of negligence by the driver. Since the bus and driver are handled by a private company, they have told us they will bear the damages and initiate disciplinary action against the driver," a BMTC source told *DH*.

Damages suffered following the crash. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

International Law Seminar: Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA); Inauguration by A K Ganguly; Keynote speeches by M N Venkatachaliah, K K Venugopal, Krishnan Venugopal, K Shashikiran Shetty, Prashanth Kumar, Santosh Hegde, Vibhu Bakhru, and Suryakant; Karnataka Judicial Academy, Crescent Road; 10.30 am

Star Women Awards: Award ceremony on the occasion of Women's Day; Guests include Anasuya Manjunath, Roopa R., Shivani, Anita, Asha, Apoorva Reddy, and Shanta Ramaswamy; Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Seva Samiti; Yuvapatha Auditorium, Jayanagar; 10 am

Ramaiah International Moot and ADR Conference: Guests include Justices Suryakant, B V Nagarathna, N Kotiswar Singh, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Chandra Dubey, Vibhu Bakhru, Manan Kumar Mishra, and Mohan Peiris; Ramaiah College of Law; Hilton, Manyata Business Park; 6 pm

CULTURAL

Ugadi Festival and Sri Krishnadevaraya Award Ceremony: Inauguration by Ramesh Kumar; Guests include Ramalinga Reddy and Dr C N Ashwath Narayan; Awardees: Chandrabose and Gurukiran; Vocal performance by Lasya Mayura and Dhanalakshmi; Telugu Vignana Samithi, Vyalikaval; 4 pm

Comedy Play Festival: Performance of 'Baay Tumba Nakbidi' directed by Vanitha Rangayana at 4 pm; 'Baaybadki' directed by Bhishma Ramayya at 7 pm; Performed by Antaranga Bahiranga team; Wadia Hall, Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi.

Book Launch: Release of 'Nigala' by Sharada Chaitra; To be released by Shatavadhani R Ganesh; Book introduction by Mirabai Phadke; Sneha Book House; B M Shri Kalabhavana, N R Colony; 10.30 am

Yakshagana Tala-Maddale: Performance of 'Gadayuddha'; Background score (Himmela) by Vishnuprasad Kalluraya and others; Foreground (Mummela) featuring Sarpangala Ishwara Bhat and K E Radhakrishna; Ravindra Kalakshetra, J C Road; 9.30 am

Multilingual Poets' Meet: Organised on the occasion of World Poetry Day; Featured poets include M R Kamala, Bindu Sajiv, Thenmoliyan, and Avineni Bhaskar; Sahitya Akademi Southern Regional Office, opposite Kalagrama, Mallathahalli; 4.30 pm

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Partly cloudy sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	32.6°C
Minimum	19.9°C
Rainfall	--
Humidity	47%
Sunset (March 21)	6:30 pm
Sunrise (March 22)	6:24 am
Moonrise	5:05 am
Moonset	7:47 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Sree Ramaseva Mandali,
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client intends to purchase all that piece and parcel of Residential Apartment bearing No. 503 (Municipal Sub No. 3/22) BBMP PID No. 55-445-3/22, located in the fifth floor in Block 'A', in the project 'Sterling Terraces', having super built up area of 2,290 square feet together with 1 stilt and 1 open car park, with proportionate share in common areas, constructed on Survey No. 6/1-A and 6/2, Ittamadu Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore District ('**Schedule Property**'), from **Balakrishna Adiga,** son of Late Padmanabha Shastri Adiga & **Veena Adiga,** wife of Balakrishna Adiga ('**Owners**').

The Owners have represented to our client that the Schedule Property is not the subject matter of any subsisting & valid mortgage, lien or charge in favour of anyone else & that there are no subsisting and valid agreements for sale or the like executed by the Owners in respect of the Schedule Property. The Owners have further represented that there are no litigations in respect of the Schedule Property.

If any person has any right to, interest in or claim against the Schedule Property including but not limited to any encumbrance thereon by way of a charge, mortgage or lien or being a party to any Agreement for Sale or the like in respect of the Schedule Property or any part thereof, may, within **7 (seven) days** hereof submit to us such claim/s together with documentary proof in support thereof, failing which, it shall be presumed that there are no encumbrances, charges or lien or any valid and subsisting Agreements for Sale or the like in respect of the Schedule Property.

SMITHA. R.B, ADVOCATE,
KING & PARTRIDGE, ADVOCATES,
NO.48, LAVELLE ROAD
BANGALORE 560 001
Ph No: 080 22212341/42
BANGALORE DATE: 20th MARCH 2026

IN THE COURT OF THE XLII ADDL CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, AT BANGALORE (CCH-43)
P & S.C. No.153/2026

IN THE MATTER OF THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF SRI. RAMESH C. R. (DECEASED)

BETWEEN: SRI. SURESH C. R. S/o. Late Ram Sanjeevaiah, Aged about 69 years, Residing at No. 33B, 8th Main, 4th Block, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560 010 ..PETITIONER

AND: NIL .....RESPONDENT

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, the above-named Petitioner filed this Probate under Sections 272, 273 and 276 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for grant probate to administer the schedule properties mentioned in the Petition. The below mentioned schedules were held by Late Sri. C. R. Ramesh, who was the elder brother of the Petitioner herein who expired on 03/12/2024.

If any person Interested/have claim, parties are hereby called upon to appear before this court in person or by pleader duly instructed on **17/04/2026 at C.C.H.43 at the City Civil Court, Bangalore at 11 A.M.** informed to show cause against the Petitioners failing wherein the appearance will be heard and declared as Ex-Parte.

SCHEDULE 'A' PROPERTIES:

Item No. I: Building site demarcated as Site No. 25TV in the layout plan approved by the Bangalore Development Authority in land survey No.11 of Thindlu Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore District, site measuring East and West 60 feet and North and south 40 feet in all measuring 2400 sq. ft and site bounded on; East by : Site No. 26, West by: Site No. 24, North by :Road, South by :Site No. 12.

Item No. II: Residential apartment bearing No. 6316 in Third Floor Block 6B of the project TRENDZ - WHISPERING WOODS built on alienated land for residential purpose bearing Sy. No. 142 to the extent of 20 guntas situated at Madagalli Village, Elavala Hobli, Mysore Taluk with MUDA- Khatha Number MY.NA.PRA/KATHA OLD-6316/21-22 having super built up area 143.0694 square meters with one free Stilt Car Parking space No. 6316 along with 41.4344 square meter of undivided share, title, right and interest in the large extent of the land and the apartment bounded on: **East by :** Internal access, **West by :** Internal access, **North by :** Flat No. 6317, **South by :** Flat No. 6315,

SCHEDULE 'B' PROPERTIES:

All Fixed Deposit Receipts and all bank balances in NRE/NRO/NRI/FDRs and other Accounts with Canara Bank, Vyalikaval Branch & JP Nagar 7th Phase branch, Bangalore; Corporation Bank (Union Bank), JP Nagar 7th Phase Branch, Bangalore; SBI, Bogadi Branch, Mysore; & SBI Vidyaranyapura Branch including Locker, Bangalore; cash and other monies lent to friends and relatives, bank balances in Emirates NBD bank in Dubai; final settlement with the company employed including the accumulated gratuity and other amounts from Hiranandani Group, Dubai, and liquid cash kept in Dubai.

Given under my hand and seal of this court, this 13th day of March 2026.

By the Order of the Court, Senior Sheristedar City Civil Court, Bangalore

MR. ADITHYA R. CHAKRAGIRI, Advocate,
Unit No. 109, Level 1, Prestige Centre Point, Cunningham Road, Bengaluru 560 052

EASTERN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM

Tender Notice No. O-AC-T-147 to 149 (Open) dated: 20.02.2026 published earlier by Sr. Divisional Engineer/2/ Eastern Railway/Asansol, in which the Date of closing of tender for Case No.O-AC-T-148 to 149-25-26 should be read as **20.03.2026** instead of 18.03.2026. Other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

ASN-399/2025-26

Tender Notice is also available at websites : www.er.indianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in

Follow us at : @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

CORRIGENDUM NO. 2

Corrigendum No. 2 for Tender Notice No.: DY.CEE/CON/RE-II/MLG/01/2026; **dtd.:** 04-02-2026 **against Tender No.** EL-CON-MLG-09-2025-26-D-K.

SN	Website Tender Notice detail before corrigendum, **EXISTING**	After the corrigendum in suppression of previous details, **TO BE READ AS**
1	**Closing of Tender:** 03-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Physical submission of Mandatory Document listed in clause 2.11.2:-** 10-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Opening of tender:-** 13-04-2026, 16:00 hrs	**Closing of Tender:** 22-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Physical submission of Mandatory Document listed in clause 2.11.2:-** 29-04-2026, 11:00 Hrs. **Opening of tender:-** 30-04-2026, 16:00 hrs

N.B.: Other terms and conditions of tender will remain same. For Detail please visit N.F. Railway website **www.ireps.gov.in**

Dy CEE/CON/Silchar
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

PROVISION OF HIGH AVAILABILITY MEDIA REDUNDANCY

Tender Notice No.: RN-ST-33-2025-26, **Date**: 16-03-2026. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Tender No.:** RN-ST-33-2025-26; **Name of Work :** Provision of high availability media redundancy for BPAC and UFSBI System over Rangiya Division. **Tender Value:** ₹66,49,516.20/-; **Earnest Money:** ₹1,33,000/-; Date & time of **closing** of tender at **15:00** hrs. and **opening** at **15:30** hrs. on **10-04-2026**. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website **http://www.ireps.gov.in**

DRM (S&T), Rangiya
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
ENGINEERING WORKS

Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Central Railway, Solapur on Behalf of President of India, invites e-tender from the reputed firms/contractor for the following works. **Tender Notice No.:** 09-2026-SrDENS, **Name of work: 1.** Provision of approach road in railway colonies at KLBG-KUI section under ADEN/KLBG sub division. **2.** Provision of approach road in railway colonies at Wadi MR section under ADEN/KLBG sub division. **Approximate Cost of the work:** Rs. 8,33,87,381.41, **Earnest Money:** Rs. 5,66,900/-, **Completion Period of the work:** 12 Months, **Maintenance Period:** 24 Months, **Last Date & Time of uploading quoted tender on www.ireps.gov.in:** 10.04.2026 upto 15:00 hrs., **Date & Time of Opening of tender on www.ireps.gov.in:** 10.04.2026 at 15:30 hrs. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. Website **www.ireps.gov.in**

Divisional Railway Manager (Works)
DE/Sur-15 **Central Railway, Solapur**

TRAVEL SAFELY, AVOID FOOTBOARD TRAVELLING

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
SIGNALLING WORK

DRM(S&T)'s Office, Central Railway, Solapur for and on behalf of President of India invites online e-tenders on Railway's e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** inform the capable reputed firms/Contractors for the following works: **Tender No.:** SUR-N-T-2025-26-46, **Name of work with its locality:** Signalling work in connection with BCM work with Geogrid and Geo-Textile method (TFTR & TBR) in Solapur Division of Central Railway. **Approx. Cost of the work:** Rs. 82,68,713.84, **Cost of the tender form:** Nil, **Earnest money to be deposited:** Rs. 1,65,400/-, **Completion period of the work:** 12 Months., **Date & Time of Closing of tender:** 17.04.2026 after 15:30 Hrs. The details are available in ireps website. Corrigendum/ amendments if any will be uploaded only on above e-procurement website. Only online tenders will be accepted. Manual/ postal/e-mail, FAX, by hand tenders will not be accepted. Bidders are requested to obtain Class III Digital Signature Certificate with Company name and register the same with **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Payment of Earnest Money (EMD) will be accepted through net banking or payment gateway or in the form of Bank Guarantee and the original Bank Guarantee should be delivered in person to the official nominated as indicated in the tender document before closing date for submission of bids (i.e. excluding the last date of submission of bids). For further details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in.**

Divisional Railway Manager
DE/Sur-13 **Central Railway, Solapur**

TRAVEL SAFELY, AVOID FOOTBOARD TRAVELLING

CANCELLATION OF TENDER NOTICE

It has been decided to cancelled the following E-Tender No. DCBL012026 MLG & DCBL022026MLG against **E-Tender Notice No. DCBL/01/2026/MLG, dated. 13-03-2026 are CANCELLED** on administrative ground. For details please visit in website **www.ireps.gov.in.**

Dy. CE/Bridge-Line, Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

SNCOs' MESS
26ED AIR FORCE GV CAMP MURUGESHPALYA BENGALURE-560017

Vacancy: One suitable candidate for the post of Office Manager cum Accountant to work at SNCOs' MESS 26ED AIR FORCE GV CAMP MURUGESHPALYA.

Eligibility Criteria:

(a) Graduation from a Govt recognized University with knowledge of office work, account, book keeping.
(b) Typing speed of at least 40WPM in English.
(c) Basic knowledge of computer application especially MS office MS excel Power point Presentation, Tally ERP 09.
(d) Should be in the group of 22 to 40 years as on 01 Apr 26 of the academic year in which the post is being filled.
(e) Physically challenged candidates will be given age relaxation up to a maximum of five years.
(f) Ex-serviceman candidates who have put in not less than six months of continuous service in the army, navy, or Air Force shall be allowed to deduct the period of such service from their actual age limit prescribed for the post of by more than three years they shall to have satisfied the condition regarding age limit Preference will be given to Clerical background.

Salary: The initial pay of the Office manager cum Accountant will be fixed as per the experience and qualification of the suitable candidate. Starging from **Rs. 35,000/- per month.**

Interested candidate may send their resume along with self-attested photocopies of their testimonials and one recent passport size colored photography with contact number latest by **31 Mar 26.** Application mat be forwarded on a plain sheet paper addressed to **"OIC SNCOs' MESS 26ED, Air Force. Gagan Vihar Camp Wind tunnel road Murugeshpalya Bengalore-560017"**

"Following, may be written on envelop:
"Application for the post of Office Manager Cum Accountant".

जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति, कोडरमा

E-Tender Notice No: 05/2026
E-TENDER DOCUMENT
FOR
Request for Proposal for the Provision of Supply of
Medicine/Kit/Materials *in Koderma District.*

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

District Health Society, Koderma Jharkhand invite Tender from eligible bidder for rate contract and supply of medicine as enclosed in Annexure E. The purpose of this tender is so soliciting competitive bids from eligible suppliers capable of providing high-quality Medicine/Kit/Materials.

	Name of Work	Description
1	Medicine/ Materials Supply	Rate Contract for Medicine//Kit/Materials.
2	Date of Publication of Tender on Website	25-03-2026 From 11:00 A.M
4	Last Date/time for Submission of bids (Online)	14-04-2026 till 04.00 P.M
5	Bid Opening Date (Technical)	16-04-2026 at 04.00 P.M (C.S. Office Koderma)
6	Bid Opening Date (Financial)	To be notified Later
7	**Bid Security/Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)**	Rs 200000 (Rupees Two lac) Submission through online payment gateway.
8	Name & Address of office inviting tender (Procurement Officer)	Civil Surgeon Cum Chief Medical Officer, Sadar Hospital Campus, Koderma.
9	Contact no. of procurement officer	9934337941
10	Helpline number.	8709947026

उक्त निहित तिथि एवं समय पर जिला क्रय समिति (स्वास्थ्य) कोडरमा द्वारा ई–निविदा, के तकनीकी भाग खोलते समय निविदादाता अथवा उनके द्वारा प्राधिकृत प्रतिनिधि उपस्थित रह सकते हैं। ई–निविदाओं के तकनीकी मूल्यांकन के पश्चात् ही सफल निविदादाताओं का मूल्य भाग खोला जाएगा।

Note: Further details can be seen, downloaded and applied through website http://jharkhand tenders.gov.in.

Civil Surgeon Cum
Chief Medical Officer, Koderma

PR 375769 Health Med Edu and Family Welfare(25-26).D

Form No. INC-26

[Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]

Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the company from one state to another

Before the Central Government Regional Director, Southwestern Region, Bangalore

In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014

AND

In the matter of SKYLINE FOUNDATIONS AND STRUCTURES PRIVATE LIMITED having its registered office at 350/2, Near Hamsa IOC Service Station, Dharmaram College Post, Hosur Road, Bangalore, Karnataka, India, 560029

……. Petitioner

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make an application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation for alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the company as per the special resolution passed at the **Extra-Ordinary General Meeting held on 25.02.2026** to enable the company to shift its Registered Office from "State of Karnataka" to "State of Kerala".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver, either on the **MCA-21 portal** (www.mca.gov.in) by filing the investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and the grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address '**E' Wing, 2nd Floor, Kendriya Sadana, Kormangala, Bangalore-560034, Karnataka, India** given below within **fourteen (14) days** of the date of publication of this notice, with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office address as mentioned below:

Registered Office of the Applicant Company: 350/2, Near Hamsa IOC Service Station, Dharmaram College Post, Hosur Road, Bangalore, Karnataka, India, 560029

For and on behalf of the Applicant SKYLINE FOUNDATIONS AND STRUCTURES PRIVATE LIMITED

Srikant Krishnan
Director
DIN: 01714450

Date: 18th March, 2026
Place: Karnataka

झारखण्ड सरकार
अधीक्षक का कार्यालय, शहीद निर्मल महतो मेडिकल कॉलेज अस्पताल, धनबाद।
दूरभाष : 0326-2230352(O), 9431120164(M) Email: superintendentsnmmch@gmail.com
पत्रांक :– 453 / SNMMCH दिनांक :– 19.03.2026

ई–निविदा सूचना

शहीद निर्मल महतो चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय अस्पताल, धनबाद में वित्तीय वर्ष 2025–26 के लिए मानक स्तर के निर्माताओं अथवा उनके अधिकृत एवं अनुभवी वितरक से हड्डी रोग विभाग में Electrocautery Machine की क्रय, आपूर्ति एवं अधिष्ठापन हेतु 2–बोली व्यवस्था (2-bid system)के ONLINE निविदा आमंत्रित किया जाता है। जिसका Gem Bid No.-Gem/2026/B/7370141 है। ई–निविदा को www.Gem.gov.in पर देखी तथा इच्छुक संवेदक द्वारा भाग ली जा सकती है। निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि– 08.04.2026 को दोपहर 01.00 बजे तक होगी।

ह0/–
अधीक्षक
शहीद निर्मल महतो मेडिकल कॉलेज अस्पताल धनबाद।

PR 375717 Health Med Edu and Family Welfare(25-26)D

JHARKHAND URJA SANCHARAN NIGAM LIMITED
(CIN No.:U40108JH2013SGC001704)
Regd. Office: 2nd Floor, JUSNL (SLDC) Building
Kusai Colony, Doranda, Ranchi - 834002
(E-mail:cetjusnl@gmail.com)

TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE

Due to unavoidable circumstances, tender invited vide NIT no. 389/PR/JUSNL/2025-26 is hereby cancelled.

PR no. 361526.

स्वहित एवं राष्ट्रहित में ऊर्जा बचावें। कृपया अपनीशिकयतों को 18003456570(कॉल सेन्टर) पर दर्ज करायें।

Sd/-
General Manager, C&M (NWBP)

PR 375628 Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd(25-26).D

e-Procurement Cell
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SPECIAL WORKS DIVISION, BUILDING CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT, Ranchi

CORRIGENDUM-3

e-Procurement Tender Reference No:- BCD/EE, Special Works Div, BCD, Ranchi-41/2025-26 Date:-06.02.2026, PR No-372536 Building(25-26).D, PR No-373003 (Building) 25-26 (D) एव PR No-373454 Building (25-26)_D Proposed Construction of Jharkhand Bhawan at Vashi, Navi Mumbai, Maharastra कार्य से संबंधित है, के तिथियों में अपरिहार्य कारणवश पुनः संशोधन किया जा रहा है जिसका विवरणी निम्नवत है :–

क्र0 सं0	मद	पूर्व तिथि	संशोधित तिथि
1	बिड प्राप्ति के लिए अन्तिम तिथि / समय	23.03.2026 at 1.00 P.M	06.04.2026 at 1.00 P.M
2	निविदा खोलने की तिथि / समय	24.03.2026 at 1.00 P.M	07.04.2026 at 1.00 P.M

शेष सभी शर्ते यथावत रहेंगी।

Nodal Officer,
e-Procurement Cell
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Special Works Division
Building Construction Department, Ranchi

PR 375760 Building (25-26)_D

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,
भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमण्डल, साहेबगंज।

शुद्धि पत्र

पी0आर0 नं0– 374616 **Building(25-26)_D** के माध्यम से आमंत्रित Construction of JSFC Godown 1000 MT at Udhwa and Mandro के ई0 निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना में निम्न संशोधन किया जाता है।

e – Tender reference no. BCD, SAHIBGANJ/09F2/2025-26

Date- 09.03.2026

क्र0 सं0	बेबसाइट पर ई–निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि	ई–निविदा खोलने की तिथि	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1.	16.03.2026 12:30 **PM**	30.03.2026 12:30 **PM**	01.04.2026 12:30 **PM**	11 माह

शेष निविदा की शर्ते यथावत रहेगी।

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
भवन प्रमण्डल,साहेबगंज।

PR 375636 Building(25-26)D

ecord-breaking ments: 664 offers to tudents, says IIMB

nsulting emerges reer pathway

Banking (11%), the premier business school said.

"Despite the global job market being in a state of flux, IIM Bangalore conducted the process smoothly. We are glad to share that job offers made during the process have exceeded expectations, both in terms of the number of offers made and the diversity of roles across sectors," Nishant Kumar Verma, chairperson, Career Development Services (CDS), said in a statement.

According to the Student Placement Committee, 35% of the companies making offers were "new recruiters" this year. "With the largest batch among all IIMs, the placement season saw strong participation from both legacy and new recruiters," the committee said.

Top recruiters by number of offers were Accenture (101), Boston Consulting Group (29), Bain & Company (23), EY-Parthenon (23), American Express (15), Kearney (13) and Tata Consultancy Services (11), the IIMB said.

"We witnessed robust participation across sectors such as FMCG, Retail, E-commerce, Conglomerates, Fintech, Healthcare, and Manufacturing. We would like to especially highlight Accenture Strategy's record number of (94) offers," CDS head Tapas Ranjan Pati said.

MoEF asks govt to clarify on land for afforestation

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Union Environment Ministry has sought clarification from the state government after a committee raised concerns that a parcel of land on which plantation activities have already been carried out has been identified for compensatory afforestation.

The matter is related to a proposal by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to turn the Hassan-Adihalli road into a key connectivity corridor between the central and northern parts of Karnataka.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, while giving in-principle approval, sought clarifications. The highway authority has sought 15.63 acres of deemed forest land to construct the road. It explained that the project, part of the Hassan-Raichur Economic Corridor, is being developed to improve connectivity between several highways, including NH 48 (Bengaluru-Mumbai).

While the deemed forest was not part of a sanctuary, the Regional Empowered Committee has noted that the alignment falls within the Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ) of the Arasikere Sloth Bear Wildlife Sanctuary.

While conveying the in-principle approval, the ministry noted: "The state government shall provide the requisite confirmation regarding the applicability of wildlife clearance, along with specific comments of the chief wildlife warden, clarifying whether the proposed road alignment passes through the ESZ..."

The ministry also stressed the need for clarification sought by the committee on the status of land offered by the NHAI for compensatory afforestation.

"The state government shall furnish details of the compensatory afforestation (CA) land bank, particularly with reference to land being offered by NHAI for various projects in Butanal village, Vijayapura district and the details of the project for which the particular area/enclosure has been taken up for compensatory afforestation plantation and its improvement should be displayed at the site for proper identification and record," it said.

Farmer dies after speeding car rams his bike from behind

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 43-year-old farmer was killed on the spot after a speeding car crashed into his bike near Bettakote village in Devanahalli taluk on Friday morning. The deceased, Venkategowda, was a resident of Bettakote. The accident occurred at 8 am after the driver of a Maruti Suzuki Swift lost control due to overspeeding.

A Maruti Suzuki Swift crashed into a bike and subsequently toppled over near Bettakote on Friday morning.

Police stated that the car first rammed into a road divider. Due to the high velocity, the driver lost control of the vehicle, which then veered off and crashed into Venkategowda's motorcycle from behind. The impact was so severe that the victim sustained fatal head injuries and died instantly.

The Channarayapatna traffic police arrived at the scene shortly after the mishap and shifted the body for post-mortem. The car involved in the accident was severely damaged.

"The driver also sustained injuries and is currently undergoing treatment at a nearby hospital. We are yet to record his statement to determine the exact cause of the crash, though preliminary investigations suggest overspeeding and reckless driving," a senior police officer said.

The Channarayapatna police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for causing death by negligence and rash driving. Further investigation is underway.

king water: Govt orders ly reviews, control rooms

The government has issued clear directions to ensure that drinking water shortages in rural areas are addressed promptly. DH FILE PHOTO

mandatory review meetings with Panchayat Development Officers (PDOs) on the 2nd and 4th Mondays for the next three months to assess ground-level realities, the minister said. In addition, district authorities will conduct press briefings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays to keep the public informed about actions taken, he added.

"To strengthen preparedness, we have instructed all districts to establish 24/7 control rooms with dedicated staff and to constitute Rapid Task Forces at the taluk-level for immediate response to drinking water issues," Priyank said.

Further, officials have been directed to undertake 100% physical inspection of drinking water sources in rural areas. Measures have been outlined to prevent contamination, including ensuring proper drainage around borewells, preventing stagnation of wastewater, and constructing protective concrete platforms around water sources, the minister said.

"Ensuring the safety of drinking water sources and creating awareness among rural communities is equally important. Officials must take steps to educate villagers on maintaining hygiene and managing water resources effectively," the minister said. As summer conditions lead to drying up of water sources and reduced borewell yield, drinking water shortages have already been reported in several rural parts of the state, Priyank pointed out.

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Nameesh Sangalad

Stunt for reels turns fatal for Hubballi teenager

HUBBALLI, DHNS: Nameesh Sangalad (15), son of local BJP leader Veeresh Sangalad, died on the spot while attempting to film an 'action brake reel' involving a car and a scooter in Hubballi.

The incident occurred on Thursday at a layout on the outskirts of the city. A case has been registered at the North Traffic Police Station.

Hubballi-Dharwad Police Commissioner N Shashi Kumar said that while attempting an 'action brake reel' - where a car and an electric scooter approach each other at high speed and suddenly apply brakes - the driver of the car lost control and crashed into the scooter ridden by Nameesh, who sustained grievous injuries and died on the spot.

"The deceased boy was the son of BJP leader Veeresh Sangalad. He was studying in Mysuru and had come home for the Ugadi festival after completing his 9th grade annual exams. He lost his life while trying to make reels with friends," he added.

The commissioner further added that despite creating awareness among parents not to give vehicles to minors, some children still manage to drive without their knowledge. Stricter measures will be taken in this regard.

Tusker trapped under railway barricade, escapes

HUNSUR (MYSURU DIST), DHNS: A 20-year-old tusker which strayed out of the forest in search of food was trapped under a railway track barricade on the fringes of Nagarahole forest. After struggling for some time, it managed to free itself and return to the forest.

The elephant had come in search of fodder, after jumping over the railway barricade near Uduvepura-Ayyanakere hamlets, in Hunsur range of Hanagodu hobli, Hunsur taluk. When the locals tried to chase it away, it tried to get through the railway barricade one metre above the ground, but got stuck between the rails.

West Asia crisis: Hospitals wary of disruption in helium supply

Helium vital to keep MRI machines running

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The conflict in West Asia could disrupt supply of Helium to India, which could, in turn, affect healthcare facilities, fear experts.

Hospitals in Bengaluru are keeping a close watch on the situation since helium is required for running MRI machines. Disruption in the supply of helium is likely to have an adverse impact on diagnostic procedures.

"MRI machines rely on extremely powerful magnets made from superconducting materials. These materials only work when cooled to very low temperatures of close to –269 degrees Celsius so that they can conduct electricity with zero resistance and no energy loss. Liquid helium is used because it is one of the few substances that can reach and maintain such low temperatures. Helium acts like a super-coolant that keeps the MRI magnet frozen so it can function perfectly. Reduced supply of helium can lead to increased operational costs and fewer operational MRI scanners," said Dr Shivani Sharma, Head of Radiology at a well-known hospital in Kengeri.

Experts said that hospitals that have procured new advanced machines manufactured after 2020 may not have to worry since the technology allows for helium to be used for several years once refilled.

Experts said that hospitals that have procured new advanced machines manufactured after 2020 may not have to worry since the technology allows for helium to be used for several years once refilled.

"The hospitals usually have a limited backup and they rely on refills. However, modern MRI systems procured after 2020 are more efficient and they lose very little helium over time. And thus, they do not have to be refilled frequently," said Dr Suneetha N, consultant, radiation oncology at a well-known hospital in Whitefield.

However, many hospitals using older machines are keeping a wary eye on the situation. While the hospitals haven't yet heard of any disruption in supply from the vendors, they opined that if there was any disruption, it could impact the diagnostic procedures significantly, especially for trauma, neuro and cancer treatment.

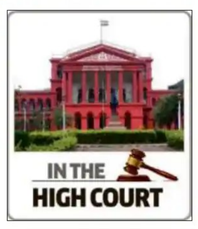
"As an onco-radiologist, I cannot overstate the importance of helium in our daily diagnostic work; it is essentially the lifeblood of our MRI scanners. MRI is critical for high-resolution soft-tissue imaging, accurate cancer staging, and monitoring a tumor's response to treatment. Without it, our ability to precisely map tumors is severely compromised," said Dr Shivakumar Swamy, head and director, Department of Radiology at a well-known hospital on the KR Road.

Dr Swamy added that a severe disruption in helium supply could trigger a crisis. "We would be forced to triage and ration MRI scans, inevitably delaying critical cancer diagnoses and treatment plans. In a worst-case scenario, this can also lead to increased MRI operational cost. We would have to fall back on CT scans, which expose patients to radiation and often lack the soft-tissue clarity we need in cancer care," he said.

Convict serving life sentence has no legal right to be released after 20 years in jail: High Court

BENGALURU, DHNS: A convict serving a life sentence has no enforceable legal right to be released upon completion of 20 years in jail, the Karnataka High Court has ruled in a recent judgment.

"The question of remission or premature release lies within the exclusive domain of the appropriate government under the applicable statutory provisions and policy," Justice Suraj Govindaraj said while dismissing a petition filed by Kishan, a resident of Bengaluru, serving a life sentence in Mysuru prison.



The petitioner, along with two others, was awarded the death penalty by an Additional City Civil and Sessions Court, Bengaluru, for the kidnapping and murder of two children.

In the appeal proceedings concluded in 2013, the high court modified the death penalty and awarded life imprisonment with a specific direction that the accused must serve the life sentence and should be in jail in terms of IPC section 57 without any commutation of sentence after completion of 14 years in jail.

Having served 20 years in prison, as on January 15, 2025, Kishan claimed that, in terms of IPC section 57, he is entitled to the benefit of remission. After examining the provision, Justice Suraj Govindaraj noted that section 57 does not mandate or authorise the release of a life convict after twenty years.

"In the absence of a specific judicial direction restricting the duration of the sentence, the sentence of life imprisonment imposed on the petitioner must be understood as imprisonment for the remainder of his natural life, subject to commutation or remission in accordance with law," Justice Suraj Govindaraj said.

The court further said that having crossed the minimum threshold of 20 years imprisonment, the petitioner is now eligible to apply for premature release/remission to the government.

"He (petitioner) is accordingly entitled to submit an application for premature release or remission to the appropriate applicable statutory provisions and the state's remission policy. If and when such an application is made, the appropriate government/Sentence Review Board shall consider the same on its individual and case, taking into account a period of actual imprisonment, the conduct of the petitioner, the nature of the offence, the interests of the victims, and the applicable policy," the court said.

Hailstorm, coupled with gusty winds, damage maize crop at Bannigol in Hagaribommanahalli taluk of Vijayanagar district.

N-K farmers bear the brunt of hailstorm; paddy crop hit

BENGALURU, DHNS

Sudden and intense hailstorm, accompanied by thunder and lightning and gusty winds, earlier this week has caused widespread damage to crops in north and south interior Karnataka.

In Ballari district alone, paddy cultivated on 1,487 acres (602 hectares) was damaged in the hailstorm and strong winds that lashed the region from Monday to Wednesday. In Kurugodu taluk 604 farmers lost paddy grown on 1,067.5 acres while Siruguppa taluk saw paddy cultivated on 420.7 acres to thundershowers. "The farmers in Kurugodu taluk have suffered maximum loss due to hailstorm and gusty winds. The district administration will take necessary steps to ensure farmers get compensation for crop loss. We will assess the extent of loss and submit a report to the government," Ballari DC Nagendra Prasad told reporters on Friday.

"The extent of crop loss is much higher than the estimates made by the district administration. Crops on more than 2,500 hectares have been damaged in the inclement weather," said Madhav Reddy, Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene president.

The grape growers of Aigali and surrounding areas in Belagavi district have suffered massive losses as the ready-to-harvest grapes dropped from vineyards after the hailstorm pounded the region. Also, harvested grapes stored in sheds for drying were damaged in thunderstorm.

"Grapes grown in more than 100 hectares in Athani taluk have been damaged. The survey to assess the crop loss is underway," deputy director of Horticulture Mahantesh Murgod toldd *DH*.

In Bagalkot district, dozens of sheep and goats have perished in lightning strikes and rain. Sugarcane, pomegranate, onion and tomato crops on several acres have been damaged.

In Kalaburagi and Yadgir district, mango growers have suffered heavy losses due to fruit-dropping after thunderstorm lashed the region from Monday to Wednesday. Meanwhile, the farmers of Chincholi have suffered extensive damage to jowar, chia and onion crops.

The storm razed banana plantation in Vijayanagar and old Mysuru region. Arecanut trees were uprooted in several districts.

A 21-year-old shepherd from Kandgallu village of Huvinahadagali taluk of Vijayanagar district died in a lightning strike while two others sustained severe burns, on Wednesday night.

At the 'Holige Mane' in a massive demand for the f was slashed by over 60% du LPG cylinder

LPG sh dampen spirit th

Hotels trim menu; wood-fired stoves back

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Shortage of LPG cylinders dampened festive fervour of Ugadi and Ramzan this year. As the ripple effects of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East hit local supply chains, the food industry is staring at a shutdown and many hotels are forced to revert to the wood-fired stoves to keep their shutters open.

From Malleswaram to the food hubs of JP Nagar and Rajajinagar, the narrative is same. At the famous 'Holige Mane' in Malleswaram, despite a massive demand for the festive delicacy, production was slashed by over 60%. "Usually, we prepare 7,000 holiges for the festival. This year, with no gas, we managed only 2,000 using firewood. People were standing in 100-meter long queues, but we simply couldn't meet the demand," a staff member said.

The crisis has forced a downsizing of menus at hotels across the city. At another popular restaurant, a menu that typically boasts over 40 varieties has been cut to a mere seven or eight items. The establishment has deployed diesel-fired stoves and electric heaters for tea and coffee, but the cost and heat

Commercial LP seeks Centre'

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has sought the Centre's intervention to address the acute shortage of commercial LPG cylinders in Bengaluru.

In a letter to Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday which was shared with the media on Thursday, Siddaramaiah highlighted the gap between demand and supply, noting that only a fraction of the required cylinders is being made available.

He said, "As against the demand of 50,000 LPG cylinders from restaurants, hotels, catering establishments and PG accommodations etc., we are able to supply only 1,000 cylinders per day."

The CM added that the shortage had resulted in closure of large number of establishments. Referring to recent directions from the Ministry on prioritising domestic LPG supply, Siddaramaiah said Karnataka has

SC bins woman's plea alleging threat by CM to usurp property

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to consider a petition filed by a woman alleging threats at the behest of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with the intention of capturing her property.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was told by a counsel on behalf of Sushma S Aradhya that she had to relocate from Karnataka to Delhi due to the persistent threats.

"Karnataka chief minister is sending people behind you in Delhi," the bench asked the counsel, who replied that the threats were not in Delhi but in Karnataka.

The counsel said the petitioner is keen to go back to the state and also wants to reside in the residential property.

The bench was informed that the petitioner had filed

police complaints and secured court orders in her favour.

The counsel contended that, despite that, the threats persisted. It was also submitted before the bench that an incident occurred in January, where stones were pelted at her house, goons entered the premises, and ransacked, vandalised, and looted her property. The petitioner's counsel alleged that they wanted to capture her property. However, the court was not convinced by the contentions.

The bench said that the petitioner had a political background. The court also said that she was fighting a political battle inside the court.

The bench made it clear that it was not keen to entertain the plea. The bench finally dismissed the case as withdrawn, leaving it open for the petitioner to move before the Karnataka High Court.

As the petitioner's counsel requested that the court issue a direction ensuring her safety upon entering Karnataka. The bench orally observed that there was an option available to e-file the plea.

FLYING VISIT

95 foreign trips by officials since 2023, reveals govt

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bureaucrats undertook 95 foreign trips since 2023, many of which were funded with taxpayer money, according to data tabled by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the ongoing legislature session.

The government spent Rs 20.28 crore on 58 foreign trips by officials. This works out to an average Rs 21.35 lakh per trip. The remaining trips were not funded by taxpayer money.

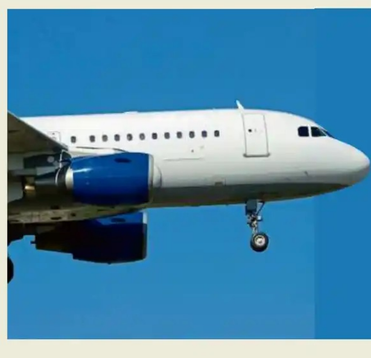
In September 2025, the state government banned all official foreign trips by officials in the fiscal after it was found that many officials did not submit "study reports" after such overseas visits.

In a circular, the department of personnel & administrative reforms (DPAR), which reports to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, stated that no official foreign trip would be allowed in 2025 until further orders. The circular pointed out that officials who went on foreign trips between August 2024 and July 2025 had not submitted study reports.

The first foreign trip funded by the exchequer in 2023 cost Rs 5 lakh for a 6-day trip to Manila (Italy), Paris (France) and Madrid (Spain) by additional chief secretary Kapil Mohan (who has since retired) for tourism-related events and roadshows.

In the same year, the government spent Rs 2.2 crore for a 11-day visit to the USA for investment promotion by Commerce & Industries principal secretary S Selva Kumar, Industrial Development commissioner Gunjan Krishna and Secretary (IT/BT) Ekroop Caur.

The costliest trip was in 2024 when the government spent Rs 4.7 crore for an official delegation attending the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland,



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in 2024. This included then Additional Chief Secretary to CM L K Atheeq, Selvakumar, Caur, Gunjan and Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board chief executive Dr Mahesh.

In March 2025, the tourism department spent Rs 81.5 lakh

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Don't touch electric wires, poles during rain: Bescom

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru Electrical Supply Company (Bescom) has advised citizens to exercise caution and follow electrical safety measures during the pre-monsoon showers.

Bescom, in a statement, advised citizens not to approach slanted or broken electric poles, broken electric lines, or places where tree branches have fallen on electric poles due to heavy wind and rain.

Citizens can contact the nearest Bescom sub-division or call the Bescom helpline 1912 if they see any electrical accidents or fallen electrical lines.

"During gusty wind and rain, there is a high possibility of electric wires snapping and falling. Bescom has cautioned the public not to stand under trees through which electric lines pass and not to move around near electric transformers during rains," a statement by Bescom said.

Consumers can also send photos and videos related to electricity problems along with their messages to WhatsApp helpline numbers.

WhatsApp helpline numbers

For any assistance or service, citizens can call the following WhatsApp helpline numbers: Bengaluru South Circle: 8277884011, Bengaluru West Circle: 8277884012, Bengaluru East Circle: 8277884013, Bengaluru North Circle: 8277884014, Kolar: 8277884015, Chikkaballapur: 8277884016, Bengaluru Rural: 8277884017, Ramanagara: 8277884018, Tumakuru: 8277884019, Chitradurga: 8277884020 and Davangere: 8277884021.

Panel to probe allegations against UAS Dharwad VC

DHARWAD, DHNS: Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, who is also the Chancellor of the state universities, has directed the government to form a one-man committee to probe allegations against P L Patil, vice chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad.

The Governor, in a letter to Agriculture Minister N Chaluvarayaswamy, has asked to constitute an inquiry committee under Section 27 (10) of the University of Agricultural Sciences Act 2009, under the chairmanship of retired high court judge Justice Chandrashekar Joshi, and to ensure that the committee submits its report along with recommendations before the expiry of the tenure of incumbent vice chancellor.

This action follows after the members of the Board of Management (BoM) of UAS, Dharwad, submitted a representation to the Governor raising multiple allegations against the VC.

Trainee vet dies in hippo attack at Tyavarekoppa zoo

Dr Sameeksha had joined duty one and half months ago

A view of the Tyavarekoppa Lion and Tiger Safari on the outskirts Shivamogga. (inset) Dr Sameeksha Reddy.

SHIVAMOGGA, DHNS:

A 27-year-old trainee wildlife veterinarian succumbed to injuries on Friday morning after being attacked by a hippopotamus at the Tyavarekoppa Lion and Tiger Safari near Shivamogga late on Thursday night.

Dr Sameeksha Reddy, a native of Bannerghatta in Bengaluru, had entered the hippopotamus enclosure around 10.30 pm to check the pregnant animal.

Sunil Panwar, member secretary of the Zoo Authority of Karnataka, told *DH* that Sameeksha had administered medicine to a bird around 10.30 pm and, while returning, noticed that the pregnant hippopotamus appeared to be in discomfort. She went to check if the animal had delivered. However, the hippopotamus charged at her and bit her abdomen, causing severe blood loss and damage to multiple organs, he added.

Panwar said that Sameeksha, being a qualified veterinarian, was authorised to enter the enclosure for treatment. "The investigation will reveal whether adequate precautionary measures were taken during her visit."

Sameeksha's uncle Rajashekar Venkatareddy said the family received multiple versions of the incident. "We were informed about the incident at night. She died at a private hospital due to excessive blood loss," he said.

Sameeksha had completed her degree from the Veterinary College in Hebbal (GKVK) and joined the zoo as a trainee about one-and-a-half months ago.

The zoo officials and her teachers described her as an enthusiastic and animal-centric person.

Forest Minister Eshwar B Khandre has ordered an inquiry into the incident.

The authorities have been directed to investigate whether proper safety protocols were followed during the veterinarian's visit and submit a report within seven days.

Khandre also directed officials to provide compensation to her family as per existing rules at the earliest.

He further instructed that veterinarians across all zoos in the state must strictly adhere to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) while treating wild animals.

GPs recording zero child marriages to get Rs 25k reward

SRINIDHI R
DHARWAD, DHNS

The incidents of child marriages often go up during the fair season and mass marriages in summer in North Karnataka.

After a series of awareness and sensitisation programmes, the women and child development department has now taken up a unique initiative. Gram panchayats (GPs) that record zero child marriages will receive a cash reward of Rs 25,000 along with an appreciation letter. This programme will be implemented across Karnataka.

Officials from the department said despite strict monitoring and extensive awareness campaigns conducted with the support of the Legal Services Authority, some families still marry off their daughters at a young age.

To strengthen prevention efforts, the government has decided to incentivise GPs that actively work to eliminate child marriages. Some panchayats have already taken proactive steps, even approaching courts to stop such marriages. These panchayats will also be considered for the award.

A state-level screening committee will evaluate the performance of GPs based on a list submitted by the department.

A GP not reporting any child marriage for three consecutive years will qualify for the award. In addition, rescued girls must be rehabilitated and supported with proper educational opportunities.

Child protection officer Deepa Javoor said, "With the cash reward, the initiative has received a significant boost".

SEA OF DEVOTEES

A large number of devotees take part in the annual fair at Malai Mahadeshwara temple in Hanur taluk of Chamarajanagar district on the occasion of Ugadi festival. DH PHOTO

Bhart Gold Mines (BGML) has remained closed since 2001 and Rs 8.75 crore has been set aside for its maintenance in the budget this year. DH PHOTO

Expedite monetisation of residues at BGML: Committee

33 million tonnes of tailing dumps lying at KGF

NEW DELHI, DHNS

A parliamentary committee has urged the Union government to expedite the monetisation of around 33 million tonnes of gold-rich tailing dumps at Bharat Gold Mines Ltd (BGML) in Kolar Gold Fields.

The Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel said in its latest report that approximately 33 million tonnes of tailings dumps (extraction waste) at KGF, containing recoverable quantities of gold and other precious metals, have been identified for monetisation.

The committee urged the Union Ministry of Mines to expedite the process of monetisation.

The committee may also be apprised of the latest developments in this regard, the report said.

Gold mine tailings dumps are massive storage facilities containing crushed rock, water, and processing chemicals left after extracting gold. They pose significant risks to the environment.

BGML is a PSU under the Mines Ministry. It has remained closed since 2001. The 2026-27 budget has allocated Rs 8.75 crore for its maintenance.

BGML was incorporated in April 1972 under the administrative control of the Department of Mines with its office at Kolar Gold Fields (KGF). It was engaged in mining and production of gold, mainly in KGF and in a few smaller operations in Andhra Pradesh.

When the BGML operations became economically unviable, they were closed. The Cabinet had taken a decision in 2006 to dispose of the assets through a global tender with the first right of refusal in favour of the ex-employees society.

The decision of the Cabinet could not be implemented for some reasons. However, the government is exploring the future course of action and other viable options with respect to BGML now, the ministry said.

The Karnataka government, in June 2024, had cleared a proposal of the Centre for reviving gold mining and auctioning of 13 tailing dumps spread over 1,003.4 acres at Kolar Gold Fields (KGF) by the Bharat Gold Mines Ltd. (BGML).

Inquiry ordered into '25 fire incidents in 24 hours' at Kudremukh

BENGALURU, DHNS

A view of the forest fire in Kerekatte range of Kudremukh National Park.

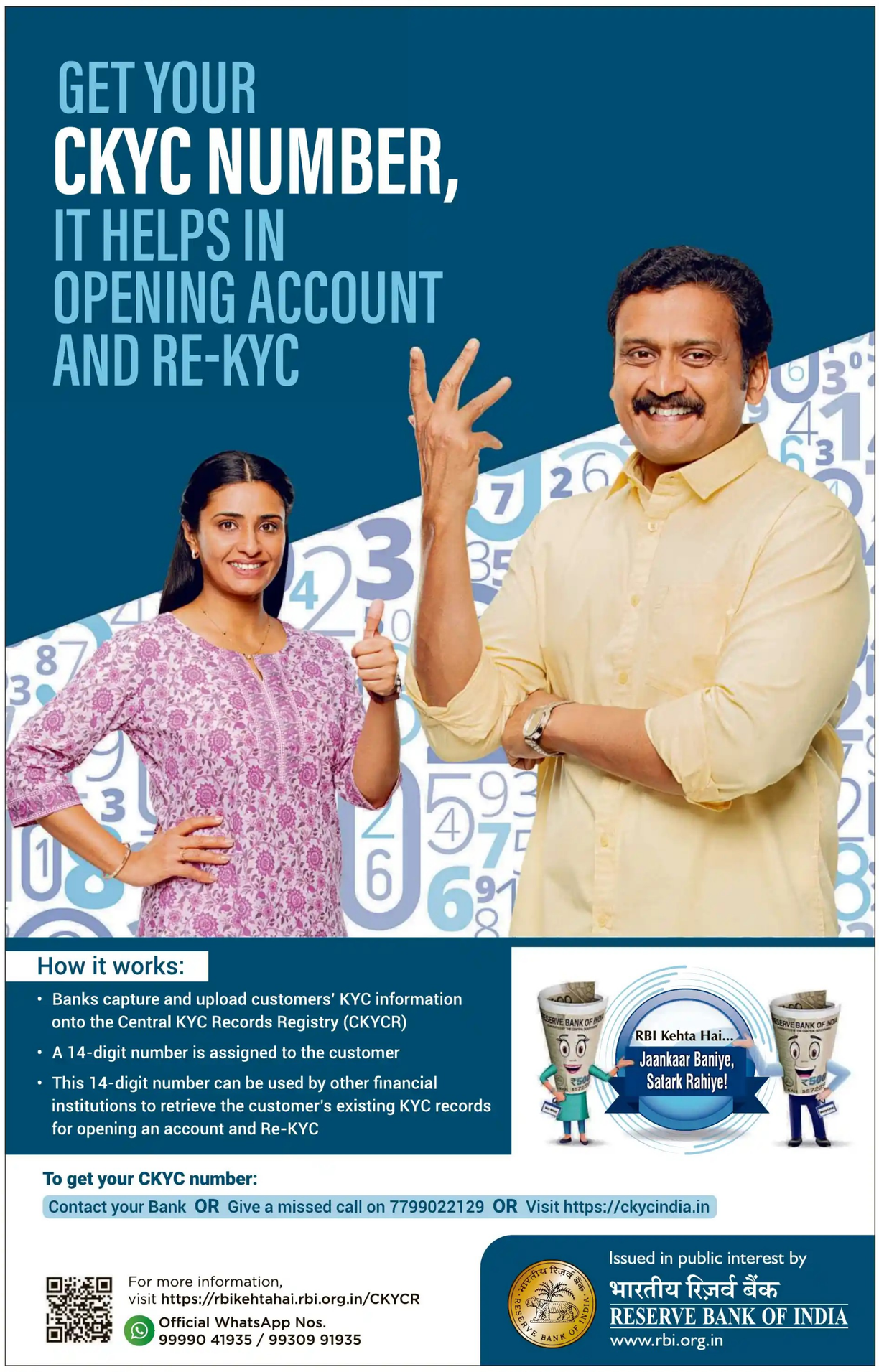
The forest fire haunting the shola grasslands in the Kerekatte range of the Kudremukh National Park since Thursday has prompted the department to order an inquiry.

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre, who held a meeting with senior officials, expressed concern over fire reported in 25 different places. "The fire incidents are man-made. I have also been told that lack of fire watchers was the main reason for this problem. Hold an inquiry into the matter and submit a report in seven days," he told officers.

The minister reiterated his direction to come up with a proposal soon for the voluntary relocation of those living inside the Park, especially those who have already expressed willingness for relocation.

Following reports that the fire incidents were not accidental, Khandre asked officials to get to the root of the matter and also probe the role of the staffers in failing to handle the fire.

M Sivarambabu, deputy conservator of forests in the Kudremukh Wildlife Division said the area estimation exercise was ongoing. "Initially, we think about 25 acres of the shola grassland has come under fire. A detailed estimation is underway. The fire was doused late in the night yesterday (Thursday)," he added.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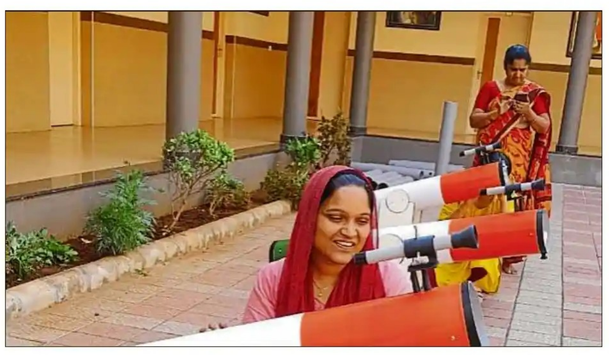
Schooled in the celestial, GP librarians get bigger job scope

NRUPATHUNGA S K
SHIVAMOGGA, DHNS


A gram panchayat librarian takes a look at the telescope created by her at a workshop in Shivamogga.

The Shivamogga Zilla Panchayat (ZP) has taken an innovative step in nurturing scientific temper among the people through the successful launch of the 'Naanu Vignaani' (I am scientist) science and astronomy workshop for gram panchayat (GP) librarians.

This initiative is said to be the first of its kind in the state. As many as 80 librarians have already been trained on methods of preparing telescopes, observation of planets and stars and other aspects.

The main objective of this initiative is to instil scientific temper in the minds of rural children and help them take up scientific research in future.

The ZP aims to eradicate superstitious beliefs from the minds of rural people through the initiative, a brainchild of its chief executive officer N Hemanth.

Hemanth told *DH*,"We want to transform rural knowledge centres into vibrant hubs of science learning. GP librarians have been entrusted with the responsibility of turning theory into real-world exploration after the training. The first batch of librarians have been trained and the response from students has been good. The workshop turned thnem into ambassadors of science in addition to being custodians of books.

Sabeena, the librarian of Agasavalli GP, who attended the workshop, told *DH* "We were literally taught how the telescope must be prepared step by step by experts and how to view planets through them. The knowledge we gained in the workshop will be used to educate people in the villages".

She said the librarians would now take the telescopes they prepared in the workshop to their respective libraries.

"They will share the knowledge of planets, stars and their significance to rural people in general and students in particular. There are many myths related to eclipse among rural people. We will leave no stone unturned to educate rural people on why they shouldn't believe in myths".

Shivamogga district has 262 GPs, the third highest in the state.

HC: CM has better work than interfering with transfers

High Court, from Page 1

The single bench had also raised concerns about the possibility of someone in the office of the chief minister mechanically issuing such orders/approvals, which results in heart burn amongst employees and consequent litigations before the court.

Taking note of the concerns raised by the single bench, the division bench directed the Chief Secretary to make clear the stand of the government. In the affidavit, the Chief Secretary stated that the staff at the CMO has been sensitised regarding the concerns expressed by the single bench.

The affidavit further stated that such notes from the CMO are only recommendatory in nature and not transfer orders or approval for transfers. It is for the department concerned to scrutinise such recommendations based on the respective Cadre and Recruitment Rules and General Transfer Guidelines, the Chief Secretary had stated.

The division bench said that no request for transfer and posting should be entertained by the CMO directly. "The matter should end at the level of the department itself. The chief minister has better and more important work to perform than interfering with the transfers and postings of the employees of the state government and government undertakings. A copy of this order is to be placed before the chief minister for necessary direction to his office," the bench said, while directing the authorities to effect transfer and posting of the appellant in the case at hand in accordance with the rules in the next transfer season.

Congress in a fix as internal rift over bypoll tickets intensifies

Samarth Shamanur, Pailwan file papers from D'gere South

BENGALURU, DHNS

The bypolls to Davangere South and Bagalkot is sure a prestige battle for the ruling Congress. But the party is facing a major challenge with internal tussle over ticket distribution intensifying ahead of the March 23 nomination deadline.

The selection of candidates for the bypolls necessitated by the demise of Shamanur Shivashankarappa (Davangere South) and H Y Meti (Bagalkot) has proved to be contentious as family members of the deceased leaders have staked claim amid multiple aspirants.

In Davangere South, the Shamanur family is keen on fielding Samarth, son of minister S S Mallikarjun and MP Prabha Mallikarjun. On Friday, Samarth filed his nomination at Davangere even as the party was busy holding consultations in Bengaluru to finalise and announce its candidate. Also, Muslim leaders backed by Zameer Ahmed Khan have been lobbying for a minority candidate citing significant Muslim population in the constituency.

When asked if he filed as an independent or Congress nominee, Samarth said, "Have you read about my grandfather Shamanur Shivashankarappa. He is the one who built the Congress party in Davangere. I am confident of getting the B form."

Prabha, who had met KPCC chief and Deputy CM D K Shivakumar in Delhi, accompanied her son for the nomination and said, "Previously, Appaji too had filed the nomination even before getting the B form. We are confident of getting the B form. Appaji's good work will be our protective shield. We will file the nomination on Monday too."

Congress leader Sadiq Pailwan also filed his nomination, saying, "If I don't get the party ticket, on Monday, our community leaders will meet and discuss. The minority votes will certainly be disturbed."

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Congress leader Randeep Surjewala and others during a meeting for the Assembly byelections, in Bengaluru on Friday. PTI PHOTO

PRABHA MALLIKARJUN
MP

"Previously, Appaji too had filed the nomination even before getting the B form. We are confident of getting the B form. Appaji's good work will be our protective shield. We will file the nomination on Monday too.

SADIQ PAILWAN
Congress leader

"If I don't get the party ticket, on Monday, our community leaders will meet and discuss. The minority votes will certainly be disturbed.

AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala rushed to Bengaluru on Friday and held a series of meetings in Bengaluru with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar, election in-charge committee members, ministers and minority representatives.

Sibling war in Bagalkot

Earlier this week, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah who held discussions with the Meti's children-Mallikarjun, Umesh, Mahadevi and Bayakka, at Vidhana Soudha indicated that a family member of Meti is likely to be fielded though the siblings are in contention.

Also, election in-charge Satish Jarkiholi who met Shivakumar in Delhi, held a meeting with Umesh in Gokak after Mahadevi threatened to contest as a rebel if Mallikarjun is given the ticket.

Samarth Shamanur, son of minister S S Mallikarjun and MP Prabha Mallikarjun, arrives with his mother and supporters for the filing of nomination for the bypoll to Davangere South constituency, on Friday. DH PHOTO/SATISH BADIGER

All eyes are now on the Congress high command as the meetings remained inconclusive. Surjewala sought to downplay the infighting, stating, "I am here (Bengaluru) because Congress believes that every party worker and leader has the right to demand for a ticket or express his opinion. We will decide as a family."

Nomination: BJP seeks extension of deadline

BENGALURU, DHNS

The BJP on Friday urged the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, to extend the last date for submitting the nomination by two days.

As per the election commission's notification, the last date for submitting the nomination is March 23.

In a letter to the CEO, BJP's Lokesh Ambekallu noted that an extension was needed due to government holidays on March 19, 21 and 22 on account of Ugadi, Ramzan and Sunday, respectively.

"After the notification, five days time for filing nomination is very short as it is important to prepare all information and data. Because of the above mentioned holidays, it's difficult to prepare these documents. Thus, I request you to consider this a special case and extend the (last) date for submitting the nomination," he said.

BJP fields veteran Charantimath for Bagalkot bypoll

Sreenivas Dasakariappa to contest from D'gere South

BENGALURU, DHNS

The BJP has fielded its former MLA Veerabhadrayya (Veeranna) Charantimath and ST Morcha vice-president Srinivas T Dasakariappa from the Bagalkot and Davanagere South Assembly constituencies, respectively, for the upcoming bypolls.

Srinivas T Dasakariappa

Veeranna Charantimath

The two bypolls in Karnataka are necessitated due to the demise of senior Congressmen H Y Meti (Bagalkot) on November 4 and Shamanur Shivashankarappa (Davanagere South) on December 14.

In Bagalkot, the fight within the BJP was between Charanthimath — a three-time MLA from the constituency — and Pralhad Pujar, a two-time MLA from the same constituency.

While Charantimath hails from the Jangama Lingayat community, Pujar is a Reddy Lingayat. Congress' Meti hailed from the Kuruba community.

In the 2023 Assembly polls, Charantimath had lost to Meti by a margin of 5,878 votes. BJP's Bagalkot District President Shantagouda Patil claimed in a conversation with *DH* that there were no differences between Charantimath and Pujar.

"We spoke to Pujar for 1.5 hours. We spoke to Charanthimath, too. From an organisational point of view, we are working till the booth-level," Patil said, adding that the party is hoping to win.

Chranthimath filed nomination on Friday. He will submit another set of nomination on Monday in the presence of BJP state president B Y Vijayendra, former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi.

Davanagere South

In Davanagere South, Congress veteran and former All India Veerashaiva Mahasabha president Shamanur Shivashankarappa had won the elections four consecutive times (2008, 2013, 2018 and 2023). In 2023, he had defeated B G Ajay Kumar of the BJP by a margin of 27,888 votes.

Srinivas T Dasakariappa hails from the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community. After being announced as the candidate, Srinivas accused the Congress of "misadministration" for three years and claimed that there was no factionalism within the BJP.

After the 2023 Assembly polls, there have been bypolls at Shorapur, Channapatna, Sandur and Shiggaon constituencies, all of which were won by the Congress.

KPSC gets new exam controller

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government has appointed a new controller of examinations at the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), replacing 2016-batch IAS officer Gyanendra Kumar Gangwar who came under fire in the Assembly.

The government has posted 2018-batch IAS officer Digvijay Bodke as the new KPSC controller of examinations. Before this, Bodke was additional commissioner (development) at the Bengaluru West City Corporation.

On March 18, during a debate on irregularities at KPSC, senior BJP lawmakers demanded Gangwar's transfer. The officer was transferred the same day and the order was made public on Friday.

Eduverse expo at Palace Grounds in Bengaluru on April 4, 5

BENGALURU, DHNS

Eduverse, a premier education and career guidance expo organised by the *Deccan Herald* and *Prajavani*, will be held at Tripuravasini, Palace Grounds in the city on April 4 and April 5.

The event will be held between 9 am and 6 pm. Entry is free for students.

The expo, one of the biggest educational expos in Karnataka, will bring together leading academic institutions and career experts under one roof.

Over 100 top institutions from across the state will take part in the expo. The event is supported by Ad6.

The institutions participating in the event include Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Reva University, Presidency University, CMR University, Sapthagiri NPS University, KLE Madical university, VIT, East Point Group of Institutions, CIT- Cambridge Institute of Technology, Rajarajeshwari College of Engineering, East West Group of Institutions, Sambharam Institutions, MS Engineering College, ABBS(Acharya Bangalore B School), AIMS-Acharya Institute of Management and Science, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Acs College of Engineering, Dr S R Chandrasekhar Institute of Speech and Hearing, Idea Smart learning (Vision Academy) and PES University.

The Universal Group of Institutions, RR institutions Engineering Colleges, Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering-Mysuru, Keladi Shivappa Nayaka University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Iruvakki, MIT World Peace University, Pune, IAS BABA, Amity University, Birla Global University, ISB&M, SRN Adarsh Group Of Institutions, ICFAI, The Oxford Educational Institutions, SDM Education Society-Ugire, Parul University, RV University, MAHE, SRM University, Kamavari Sangham, Sai Vidya Institute of Technology, Deccan PU College, Sheshadripuram college, Atria Institute of Technology, Maharaja Institute of technology and other institutions are also taking part in the event.

Scan to register for mock CET & NEET exams.

The students can utilise the expo to save time and effort, compare courses, eligibility, fees, and placements in one place.

The expo will also include expert guidance through interactive sessions on trending careers. The students can also take mock CET and NEET exams at the expo.

Man dies outside police station; locals allege negligence

HULIYAR (TUMAKURU DISTRICT), DHNS: A 50-year-old man collapsed and died shortly after he was released by the cops in front of the Huliyar police station in Tumakuru district on Thursday.

Alleging police brutality and negligence, locals sat in protest in front of the police station with the dead body.

Guddegowda Kantharaju (50) was one of the five arrested for playing cards on Thursday. The cops subsequently took Kantharaju, and the others, off to the Huliyar police station. Kantharaju reportedly took ill while he was at the police station. He collapsed soon after he was released and walking out of police station.

Although he was rushed to a nearby hospital, doctors pronounced him dead on arrival. Kantharaju's body was then taken to the Tumakuru district hospital for a post-mortem.

Satish, who was arrested along with Kantharaju, said that they were kept at the police station between 5.30 pm and 8 pm.

"Kantharaju was so sick he was asleep all the while he was at the station. We were not even given water to drink. In fact, the police kicked Kantharaju to wake him up before proceeding to question him. Although he was allowed to leave the station after questioning, he collapsed immediately.

The police did not respond at once, and it was only after we cried for help that they took him to the hospital," alleged Satish.

Meanwhile, the villagers have demanded a CID probe into Kantharaju's death.

Industrial diesel price up by 25%, may fuel inflation

Fuel, from Page 1

She claimed that premium petrol hardly makes up for 2-4% of the entire petrol sold in the country.

Sharma said the decision to increase the price of premium petrol and bulk diesel has been taken by oil marketing companies as the prices have been deregulated for petrol since 2010 and diesel since 2014. "The government does not regulate petrol and diesel prices," she said.

Analysts felt the elevated energy prices are likely to exert upward pressure on inflation in coming months. Chief Economist at India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) Devendra Pant said the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation is likely to rise to 3.7% in March.

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E-TENDER NOTICE NO.
RWF/M/OT/MMR/2025-26/90 Dated: 17/03/2026

E - TENDER: On behalf of the President of India, the Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer invites electronic tender for the following work online through the website **http://www.ireps.gov.in (Works)**. **Tender No.:** RWF/M/OT/MMR/2025-26/90 Dated: 17/03/2026. **Name of the work :** Need based Re-lining of Tube Ovens in Mould room. **Estimated Cost :** Rs. 29,40,000/- **Earnest Money Deposit :** Rs. 58,800/- **Date &Time of Closing of Tenders :** 08/04/2026 at 10.30 Hrs. **Completion Period :** 12 months
Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer/W-II

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.
RWF/M/OT/MMR/2025-26/91 Dated: 18/03/2026

Tender No.: RWF/M/OT/MMR/2025-26/91 Dated: 18/03/2026. **Name of the work :** Need based maintenance of flight roller conveyors at Mould room. **Estimated Cost :** Rs. 20,34,800/- **Earnest Money Deposit :** Rs. 40,700/- **Date &Time of Closing of Tenders :** 09/04/2026 at 10.30 Hrs. **Completion Period :** Two years.
Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer/W-II

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.
RWF/M/OT/AFS/2025-26/93 dtd. 16/03/2026

Tender No.: RWF/M/OT/AFS/2025-26/93. **Name of the work :** Chipping and Loading of axles to Station-1 at Axle Forge Shop. **Estimated Cost :** Rs. 19,60,000/- **Earnest Money Deposit :** Rs. 39,200/- **Date &Time of Closing of Tenders :** 07/04/2026 at 10.30 Hrs. **Completion Period :** 12 Months.
Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer/AP

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.
RWF/M/OT/SMS/2025-26/94 Dated: 20/03/2026

Tender No.: RWF/M/OT/SMS/2025-26/94 Dated: 20/03/2026. **Name of the work :** Outsourcing the work 1) Need based chipping /cleaning of used steel sampling spoons at SMS, 2) Need based EAF Delta roof maintenance at SMS. **Estimated Cost :** Rs. 17,80,820/- **Earnest Money Deposit :** Rs. 35,600/- **Date &Time of Closing of Tenders :** 11/04/2026 at 10.30 Hrs. **Completion Period :** 15 months.
This tender notice can be viewed on our website **www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in**
Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer/Melting

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast March 21: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	32.4	14.2	5.4
Bidar	33.8	16.8	03
Vijayapura	33	17	00
Dharwad	31.6	16	00
Haveri	33.6	17.8	00
Kalaburagi	35.8	21.6	00
Raichur	35	20.4	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	33.4	21.5	00
Karwar	35.4	22.6	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	34.2	24.1	00

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	31.4	17.8	00
Bengaluru	31.4	19.9	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	33	19.2	00
Davangere	32.5	15.5	00
Hassan	33.9	13.9	00
Mysuru	33.6	18	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	30.8	17.4	00

OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	26.8	16	07
Kolkata	33.8	25.1	00
Mumbai	30.7	21.1	00
Chennai	32.9	24.7	00
Pune	34	16.7	00
Hyderabad	32.4	20.8	00
Th'puram	34.8	24.7	00

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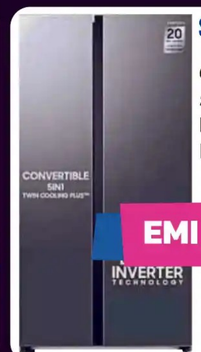

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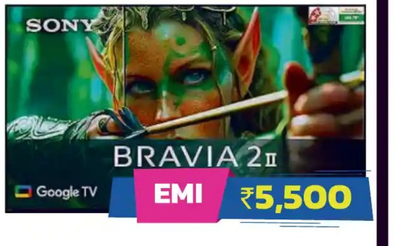

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A worrying retreat on trans rights

The Supreme Court's NALSA judgment of 2014 and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act of 2019 are landmark events in the recognition and implementation of the rights of transgender persons. They recognised the third gender and the transpersons' right to determine their own gender identity, which was accepted as part of the right to life. Together, the right and the law have helped shape their sense of individuality, self-respect, and dignity. With the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, introduced in Parliament last week, these progressive measures are in danger of a reversal. The Bill seeks to narrow the definition of "transgender person," and holds that self-perceived sexual identities cannot fall within the Act's definition of transgender persons. It says: "...such identification cannot be extended on the basis of any acquirable characteristics, or personal choice, or claimed self-perceived identity of an individual." It provides for the District Magistrate to issue a certificate of identity after examining the recommendation of a designated medical board. The existing law has had a limited impact in ensuring protection for the LGBTQIA+ community. The amendment will take many of them outside the law's purview, leaving them vulnerable to harsher persecution.

Amendment erodes transgender right to self-identification, risking further exclusion and discrimination

The amendment shrinks the scope of the 2019 law by making gender identity a physical and medical state. It confuses sex for gender and uses an external agency and standards to judge a person's idea of oneself and to impose that judgment on the person. Self-identification of gender and declaration are at the core of the existing law – taking that right away would amount to going against the letter and spirit of the law and the Supreme Court judgment. The declared aim of the amendment is to ensure that the definition of a transgender person is precise so that the statutory benefits reach a clearly identifiable class of persons. By mandating that medical institutions should share the details of people undergoing gender-affirming surgeries with the District Magistrate, the amendment violates the right to privacy. It could also face constitutional scrutiny because it denies the right to self-identification, which the Court said is a constitutional right.

The amendment will remove many safeguards available to transgender persons, as many in the community will no longer be considered transgender. This change will increase the scope for institutional corruption and enable discrimination. Critically, the Bill was formulated without consulting the community it will affect. The government should address these concerns and withdraw the proposed amendment.

Executive apathy a constitutional affront

In a striking inversion of parliamentary convention, even as the Opposition parties in New Delhi moved a no-confidence motion against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, accusing him of partisanship, Karnataka witnessed something altogether unprecedented. U T Khader, the Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly, himself walked out of the House in solidarity with the Opposition and strongly criticised the state government for failing to provide answers to questions that were posed by the legislators. At the heart of this confrontation is the systematic undermining of Question Hour, the very instrument that holds the executive accountable. What angered the Speaker was that out of 250 unstarred questions, the government replied to barely 90. That the Question Hour is the first business of every sitting underlines its importance. It allows the members, especially those from distant parts of the state, to bring issues concerning their constituencies directly to the notice of the Chief Minister or ministers, compelling the government to respond. Equally troubling was the poor attendance of the ministers, reducing the Assembly to a procedural formality. The Speaker's action might have caused acute embarrassment to the government, but in doing so, he upheld his role as the custodian of the House.

Bureaucratic indifference highlights the urgency to uphold the legislature's constitutional authority

This episode also exposes a malaise that extends beyond Karnataka. Democratic conventions are shaped not only by rules but by example. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has, over time, set a disquieting precedent. His frequent absence during parliamentary debates has signalled a diminished regard for legislative scrutiny. In contrast, former prime ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Atal Bihari Vajpayee attached great importance to their presence in the House.

Legislatures are not mere stages for political theatre; they are, in essence, temples of democracy. When the executive treats them with indifference, it weakens the very foundation of representative governance. On the directions of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh has issued notices to senior IAS officers in connection with the Speaker's grievance. This is a welcome move that demonstrates intent against administrative lethargy. But this chapter cannot end with internal reprimands. Persistent bureaucratic indifference to legislative questions is not a procedural lapse; it is a constitutional affront. The Assembly must now assert its supremacy and censure those who are responsible – ministers and officers alike – to send a message in clear terms: in a democracy, the executive is subordinate to the legislature. Disrespect shown to the legislators is, in essence, an affront to the citizens who elect them.

UNLEARNED LESSONS

The fatal fallout of unpaid traffic fines

As weak enforcement negates strong data and improved infrastructure, road fatalities rise in India

SUDEEP LAKHTAKIA

India has nearly 1.5 lakh kilometres of national highways, a rapidly growing network that has transformed road transport across the nation. But this modern infrastructure is also claiming more lives than ever before in road accidents. India recorded 1.72 lakh road deaths and over 4.6 lakh injuries in 4.8 lakh road crashes in 2023. We have better roads, smarter enforcement technology and stricter penalties, all of which should lead to fewer accidents. But the death toll on Indian roads is almost directly proportional to growth in road coverage, presenting road crashes as an unfolding public health crisis that demands immediate attention. We face a complex problem that has led to epistemic erosion – a case where data exists, but learning has failed. We know what is wrong, but we have unsafe roads primarily because of unlearned lessons.

Road safety deteriorates when communities – vehicle users, pedestrians, and system authorities – stop learning and acting on what keeps roads safe. A gradual loss of evidence-based enforcement and a lack of institutional learning encourage unsafe practices to persist. This builds into a culture that gets worse over time, with safety compromised by the user, the very demographic that will suffer the most and probably be hurt or die on India's roads.

One aspect of safety is directly linked to the vision of the government. When political pressure overrides evidence, planners ignore crash data. They begin normalising violations, the community accepts these transgressions and catastrophes on the roads follow. It is ironic that governments sit on large 'road crash' data, yet authorities deal with engineering, enforcement, and public health in watertight compartments.

The first step, therefore, ought to be the enforcement of strict penalties for traffic violations. These penalties are a tool to financially disincentivise violations and record those for future administrative/legal action. Law enforcement agencies in India have significantly improved their ability to accurately 'detect' traffic violations and the capacity to issue challans promptly. However, the collection of the fines has not kept pace with detection. This is one reason why road discipline and road safety have taken a hit. Some cities even report fine collections as low as 5%. There should be zero tolerance for non-payment/delayed payment of fines.

Uncollected fines encourage violations. Prompt ticketing is the proverbial 'last mile' of enforcement of rules and would be a severe disincentive to taking and causing risks. It will incentivise

expected road behaviour for the safety of all road users. There is also a principle of equity between violators – those who pay promptly and those who do not. Ideally, every transgressor should be held accountable.

In Delhi, there are about 2.5 crore challans pending against private drivers and about 20 lakh against commercial drivers as of 2025, according to traffic police data. These figures contradict the common impression that commercial drivers flout rules with impunity. Of the approximately three crore pending cases, almost one-third is for speeding violations and about 48 lakh for unauthorised parking – two major reasons for road crashes/casualties. Recently, in Pune, when a high-profile road crash grabbed the national headlines, it dawned on the authorities that the offender had multiple traffic challans pending against him. Timely imposition of the penalties could have saved lives. This is the "broken window syndrome" in policing – when small disorders are not fixed, they encourage more disorder.

Tracking every violation

Collection of fines for traffic violations is a low-hanging fruit, but it still falls well short of expected standards. In this context, Telangana's no-amnesty position is to be welcomed. This model can address many concerns and help send out a signal that will check violations and, therefore, accidents.

While penalties are one fixable aspect, we must study complex interlinkages that pose serious challenges to road safety and professional traffic management. These include the conduct of driving tests and license issuance, road maintenance, repair quality, poor traffic engineering, and road signage installation. Consider the ease with which driving licences are issued or can be virtually bought across the nation. What is the value of a driving test when you negate or undervalue a serious examination? Furthermore, consider that while many of the roads are well laid out, the tendency to create diversions, hurdles or maintenance work that starts without warning and without adequate and visible signage adds new dangers for fast-moving traffic. Inappropriately placed or badly lit traffic signposts expose inherent failings of the system.

We need holistic solutions that can work across the value chain. One effort worth a mention is the proposed linkage between insurance and the challans – a system in which higher fines will lead to higher insurance premiums. This will demand proper installation of objective and tech-supported enforcement systems, under which it is theoretically possible for every violator to be fined for every violation. Multiple violations must lead to a loss of the driving licence, as is the case in many countries across the developed world.

India cannot be a developed nation with a high rate of accidents. Finding solutions must be a key development priority – it is time the country looked to draw the full benefits of a modern road network, to drive into the future, faster but also safer.

(The writer is a former director general of the NSG who led traffic management as Joint Commissioner of Police – Traffic, Hyderabad, and as Commissioner of Police, Vijayawada; Syndicate: The Billion Press)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Austerity, only on a war footing?

It is only when the crisis hits that thrift begins to make sense

SUBHASHINI DINESH

It was a small family gathering, and like all gatherings, a lot of conversations revolved around food. Suddenly there was stunned silence when a cousin casually mentioned that she usually made one-pot (read pressure-cooked) meals and quite a few vegetable curries/*palyas* in pressure pans. Twenty-three pairs of eyes looked at her in disbelief; then suddenly there was laughter all around, with jokes on her "pressure-cooked" food: "Oh...so you make cauliflower in a pressure cooker? Oh...what about brinjal? And ladies' fingers? I am sure you pressure cook the greens as well as other tender vegetables." Everyone was in full steam on their cooker jibes.

Today, suddenly, pressure cooking everything has become an advisory, considering the LPG shortage in the country. Maybe the cousin is having the last laugh after all those jokes on her.

Don't we take whatever we get for granted? Fuel, water, power. When the current crisis first crawled into the kitchen, we felt the twist in our stomachs. Suddenly, newspapers and social media began talking about the careful use of LPG, the need to switch to induction stoves, and most importantly, a sudden realisation of the effectiveness of pressure-cooked meals as a means of saving fuel—not to mention the additional advice of soaking pulses and rice a few minutes before the cooking process.

With the war guzzling the global oil supply chain and burping out a severe crisis, vehicle users have pressed the panic button. Now, the public discourse is being steered onto the path of austerity. There are loud murmurs in the long petrol station queues about thoughtfully using cars/scooters. There seems to be a sudden awareness to become austere and not switch on the car ignition to the nearby grocery-vegetable store; that's how important it is to walk to preserve one's health as well as that of the planet. These are now becoming a war cry in a zone of a threatening fuel supply.

Isn't it the same for water? The summer is now in second gear, and the water sources and water table are slowly showing signs of depletion. It is still in a nascent stage of crisis. But soon, there will be a clarion call for judicious use of water, and public service campaigns will focus on water conservation.

Now, isn't it possible for us to become more sensitive about the limitations of natural resources and carefully spend them? Or do we always have to wait for a war or an inevitable water-table threat to wake the eco-warriors in us?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A wake-up call for the executive

By walking out of the House, U T Khader, the 17th Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, has given a shock treatment to the executive over the insufficient number of written replies from government departments to MLAs' questions. The Question Hour is an important tool for the opposition to expose the government's failures. Bureaucracy has the responsibility to collect all information needed to answer questions and brief the concerned minister to answer on the floor of the House. Hence, when the legislature is in session, bureaucracy has to be on its toes, collecting information and assisting the minister to answer questions. Ministers are also judged by how they answer supplementary questions, their ability to defend government action, and their use of wit and humour. Will Khader's action nudge the executive to mend its ways and show its mettle?
H K Sivananda, Bengaluru

World on alert

The reported attack on the South Pars Gas Field marks a dangerous escalation in the ongoing conflict across West Asia, signalling that critical energy infrastructure is now being weaponised. As one of the world's largest natural gas reserves, South Pars is central not only to Iran's economy but also to global energy stability. Targeting such a vital asset reflects a strategic shift from conventional military engagements to economic disruption. This development has far-reaching implications. Attacks on energy facilities trigger volatility in global markets, disrupt supply chains, and heighten geopolitical tensions. It also risks inviting retaliatory strikes on similar infrastructure, potentially creating a cycle of escalation. Weaponising energy resources transforms regional conflicts into global crises, as economies far beyond the battlefield feel the impact.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

Fill the policy gap

The Supreme Court's call to recognise paternity leave underscores that parenting is a shared responsibility. While regulations supporting mothers exist, the lack of legal provision for fathers reveals a policy gap. Introducing shared parental leave would promote gender equality, support child development, and help reduce postpartum stress, making it a vital step toward a more balanced and inclusive society.
Fathima Hania, Bengaluru

Partisan EC

The Election Commission's administrative shake-up in West Bengal on the eve of the Assembly elections is unprecedented. This action further strengthens suspicions that the Commission favours the ruling dispensation at the Centre, which does not augur well for democracy.
V Padmanabhan, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi must first tackle the LPG crisis and petrol price hike and then try to occupy Bengal.
Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal CM

We are all in it together, of course, desperate to regain the upper hand by any means necessary.
Peter Watts

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

When water wars shape livelihoods

Economic shocks from transboundary water conflicts call for policies that prioritise labour and social protection

SUSHANTA MAHAPATRA AND MADAN MEHER

Transboundary rivers are not only geopolitical flashpoints; they are economic lifelines that shape jobs, wages, and migration. As global freshwater demand threatens to outstrip the sustainable supply by roughly 40% by 2030, the human costs of disputes over shared basins increasingly appear as labour-market shocks rather than abstract policy disputes, as noted in the Global Risks Report 2023 of the World Economic Forum. If policymakers continue to treat rivers primarily as instruments of sovereignty, they risk overlooking how water conflicts cascade into unemployment, informal work, seasonal migration, and long-term human-capital loss.

Start with the most visible channel: agriculture. In many developing economies, a large share of the workforce still depends on water-intensive farming. When irrigation falters, planting choices change, farm productivity falls, and rural wages decline. The Indus River basin, for instance, sustains nearly 268 million people across its catchment. This population's livelihoods depend directly on predictable river flows and irrigation schedules, as highlighted in the Indus Basin Assessment 2024 by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

A disruption in dry-season flows or sudden changes in reservoir operations does not simply reduce crop yields; it eliminates daily wage opportunities for thousands of farm labourers, pushes smallholders into debt, and increases seasonal migration to urban labour markets that are already crowded.

Hydropower projects reveal another layer of the development dilemma. Upstream dams can generate electricity and industrial jobs for the riparian economies, but can simultaneously impose costs on downstream labour markets that depend on fishing, floodplain cultivation, and small-scale processing.

Ethiopia's Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, the largest hydroelectric project in Africa, reached its full generating capacity of 5,150 megawatts in 2025. This provided electricity to millions while intensifying tensions with downstream countries that depend on the waters of the Nile for their agriculture and livelihoods, *Reuters* reported in 2025.

While hydropower can accelerate industrial growth, downstream communities may face a decline in river-based employment as natural water regimes change.

The Mekong River basin demonstrates how ecological change quickly translates into labour market change. Hydropower expansion and altered river flows are already reshaping fisheries that support millions of livelihoods across Southeast Asia. Scientific assessments warn that up to one-fifth of fish species in the Mekong could face extinction risks under the current development trajectories, according to a 2024 report by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) published in 2024. Fewer fish mean fewer fishing jobs, lower incomes at the landing sites, and a shift by many households into precarious forms of work, such as casual construction or seasonal migration. This often comes with significant social and nutritional consequences.

Labour markets often react quickly to water shocks. Reduced irrigation or declining fisheries lowers demand for rural labour and depresses wages, pushing households to borrow or migrate in search of work. Over time, this can lead to distress migration, school dropouts, and a shift towards low-productivity urban jobs. The United Nations World Water Development Report 2024 notes that increasing water scarcity is closely linked to migration and livelihood disruptions in vulnerable regions.

Beyond the geopolitical framework

From a development-economics perspective, three policy priorities follow.

First, protecting labour incomes should be central to transboundary water governance. Dam operations and water-sharing must consider impacts on downstream employment. Measures such as minimum dry-season flows can help sustain livelihoods.

Second, benefit-sharing from upstream hydropower should include labour support. A share of electricity revenues could finance wage assistance for fishers, retraining for farmers, and investments in small-scale aquaculture or alternative rural enterprises.

Third, water-sensitive social protection is essential. Crop insurance, public works during lean seasons, and targeted cash transfers can stabilise incomes when water availability changes. Linking these programmes with basin-level early warning systems and hydrological data sharing can strengthen livelihood security.

Gender and generational impacts also require attention. Women involved in post-harvest processing and informal fisheries trade often lose income first when the river ecosystems decline, while children may face nutritional risks and disruptions to schooling. Ignoring labour realities in transboundary water governance risks long-term unemployment, migration, and weakened rural economies.

If the objective is genuine development rather than geopolitical advantage, policymakers must begin to see water treaties not only as instruments of sovereignty but also as frameworks for protecting livelihoods. Only then can shared rivers serve as foundations for decent work and resilient development rather than sources of conflict and instability.

March 22 is World Water Day. (Sushanta teaches economics at ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education, Hyderabad; Madan teaches economics at Amity Business School, Amity University, Chhattisgarh)

Equity in education: Laws in the making

SANJAY HEGDE

On January 29, the Supreme Court stayed the UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026, calling them "prima facie vague" and "capable of misuse". The Regulations had been framed pursuant to the Court's own directions in Abeda Salim Tadvi v. Union of India, on a petition by the mothers of Rohith Vemula and Payal Tadvi. The state government of Karnataka, meanwhile, announced its intent to enact the Rohith Vemula (Prevention of Exclusion or Injustice) Act. Together, these developments frame the central legal question: Does India possess an adequate statutory architecture to deal with caste discrimination in higher education?

The record before the Supreme Court itself demonstrates that it does not. An intervention application by a former UGC chairman who led the 2007 inquiry into the treatment of SC/ST students at the AIIMS draws on three official studies covering thousands of students. The findings are consistent. Teachers mark SC/ST students down in internally evaluated practical examinations, while externally evaluated papers yield fair results.

Hostels are monopolised by dominant-caste groups. Administrations delay applications, harass students seeking scholarship attestation, and disclose confidential counselling records. The SC/ST cells are either non-functional or have been merged into toothless Equal Opportunity Cells. Only 30.7% of surveyed students reported a functioning SC/ST cell. When faced with discrimination, 42% turned to friends, 27% relied on their own resources, and only 14% approached teachers. Over 90% agreed that a dedicated Anti-Discrimination Act was necessary.

Existing law cannot fill this gap. The SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, is a criminal statute designed for the justice system at large, not the ecology of a university campus. The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, addresses untouchability but offers no campus-specific remedy. Article 15(1) prohibits caste discrimination, but constitutional rights operate vertically against the State and do not, without enabling legislation, reach individual teachers, students, or private university administrators. The UGC's 2012 Regulations were advisory and unenforceable; a decade on, compliance remained abysmal. The 2026 Regulations sought to change this by replacing an advisory framework with legally binding obligations: mandatory Equal Opportunity Centres, equity committees with investigative powers, equity squads, and compliance backed by financial penalties, including withdrawal of grants. The UGC Act, 1956, under Sections 2(f) and 12(b), already empowers the Commission to withhold funding from non-compliant universities. These powers have never been used against institutions that tolerate discrimination. The 2026 Regulations attempted to operationalise them.

The stay order focused on Clause 3(c), which defined caste-based discrimination as discrimination against SC, ST, and OBC members. The petitioners argued this left general category students "completely remediless". But Clause 3(e) of the same Regulations defines discrimination broadly enough to cover any stakeholder. The separate mention in Clause 3(c) follows established legislative precedent: the PoA Act registers a case only where the perpetrator belongs to an upper caste, and the victim to an SC or an ST. The Court also flagged the omission of anti-ragging provisions and penalties for false complaints. These are remediable drafting deficiencies, not grounds for staying an entire framework born of the Court's own directions.

Karnataka's proposed Bill offers a parallel path through state legislation, with provisions for fines up to Rs 10 lakh on institutions, equity committees modelled on the POSH Act's Internal Complaints Committees, and compensation for victims. If enacted, it will be the first such law by any state. But what is ultimately needed is a comprehensive central enactment that deploys the UGC's existing enforcement powers and does not leave over 90% of affected students with a framework they have found inadequate.

(The writer is a senior advocate in the Supreme Court of India.)

Casteism on Campus

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) data shows a **118.4%** rise in caste-discrimination complaints in campuses – from 173 in 2019-20 to 378 in 2023-24
- The Government of India reported to a parliamentary panel that **122 students** died by suicide between **2014** and **2021** at IITs, IIMs, and central institutions
- A significant proportion of the students were from **SC, ST,** and **OBC** communities

Those who allegedly fell victim:

2008: P Senthil Kumar, University of Hyderabad, dies by suicide, Feb 24.

2013: M Venkatesh, University of Hyderabad, dies by suicide, Nov 25.

2016: Rohith Vemula, University of Hyderabad, dies by suicide, Jan 17.

2019: Payal Tadvi, BYL Nair Hospital, dies by suicide, May 22.

2022: Y Gunasindhu, a Coimbatore private college student, dies by suicide, May 17.

2023: Darshan Solanki, IIT Bombay, dies by suicide, Feb 12.

The Rohith Vemula Bill

- **The Rohith Vemula (Prevention of Exclusion or Injustice) (Right to Education and Dignity) Bill** is a proposed legislation in Karnataka, aimed at curbing caste-based discrimination, social exclusion, and harassment in higher education institutions.
- Named after **Rohith Vemula**, a PhD scholar of the University of Hyderabad, who died by suicide on January 17, 2016
- His death brought the focus on caste bias in campuses, sparking nationwide protests

The Bill...

- Recognises caste bias as a structural and institutional problem
- Marks a shift from guidelines to an enforceable law
- Exclusively applicable to SC, STs

Key Provisions

The Bill is proposed to...

- Apply to government, private, and deemed institutions
- Define institutional discrimination, including academic bias and exclusion
- Cover denial of opportunities, harassment, segregation, and unfair evaluation
- Mandate equity committees with 80% SC/ST representation
- Introduce time-bound grievance redressal mechanisms
- Fix accountability for faculty, administration, and institutions
- Impose a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh on educational institutions contravening provisions of the proposed law

Status: Proposed, not introduced in the Legislative Assembly yet

The UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026

The UGC notified the Equity Regulations, 2026, on January 13, 2026, seeking to replace the 2012 regulations

The new regulations...

- Apply to all higher education institutions, expanding the ambit to deal with explicit and implicit bias against SCs, STs and OBCs
- Mandate Equal Opportunity Centres, Equity Committees, and 24×7 helplines with time-bound grievance redressal
- Provide for monitoring, reporting, and penalties, including loss of recognition and funding for non-compliance

Status: The new regulation was stayed by the Supreme Court in January 2026, over concerns about ambiguity, scope, and potential misuse

Our government stands firm in its resolve to enact the Rohith Vemula Act in Karnataka – to ensure no student faces discrimination based on caste, class, or religion.

SIDDARAMAIAH, Chief Minister, Karnataka

Beyond admission: The battle to belong

HARISH S WANKHEDE

The entry of Dalit, Bahujan, and Adivasi (DBA) students into the prestigious halls of higher education is a modern reality. Many of these young people are the first in their family history to ever step onto a university campus. However, getting through the door is only half the battle. Because of historical marginalisation and modest financial backgrounds, these students often lack the 'social capital' – the hidden network of professional connections and 'insider knowledge' that the social elite participants have to navigate their academic success.

Some of the social-elite peers of DBA members are influenced by deep-seated prejudices and frequently struggle to acknowledge them as their equals. This exclusion is not always loud or obvious; it often operates through subtle aggressions. It might look like a student changing hostel rooms to avoid a Dalit roommate, or a professor giving a DBA student the lowest possible marks during an oral exam. At a structural level, it appears as the deliberate failure of universities to fill reserved seats for students and faculty. When these tensions go unaddressed, the friction turns into humiliation or physical violence. In the most extreme cases, it leads to the 'institutional murders' (in cases of Dalit students committing suicides) caused by a toxic, unsupportive environment entrenched in the institutions of higher learning.

Since the tragic deaths of students like Rohith Vemula and Payal Tadvi, there has been a persistent demand for a real legal shield to protect the dignity and careers of DBA students. This is necessary because most universities still lack internal systems to deal with the unhealthy social atmosphere created by caste-based unequal relationships.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) proposed the Equity Regulations to replace an outdated 2012 framework. This was meant to be a democratic move toward real justice. Similarly, the Karnataka government's proposal to enact the 'Rohith Act' has further strengthened the demands for effective social justice for the marginalised social groups.

However, these moves, especially the new UGC regulations, have faced backlash from some elite groups who claim these rules will only worsen caste divisions or be used to file false complaints.

The courts have traditionally protected these inclusive measures. However, a Supreme Court bench recently put the UGC's new rules on hold. The apex itself previously ordered the government to create a 'robust mechanism' to stop caste bias. Numerous official reports have already proven that even India's top-tier institutions, like the IITs and IIMs, practice subtle forms of exclusion that stunt the progress of DBA students.

The UGC Equity Regulations or the Rohith Act were designed specifically after examining the limitations of the old institutional mechanisms to protect and promote the interests of the vulnerable social groups in the institutions of higher education.

Resistance to these crucial reforms only demonstrates the myopia of the conservative social elites as they refuse to admit that caste discrimination is built into the system itself.

While reservation policies have helped DBA students enter universities, they alone cannot erase the social prejudices that govern daily life on campuses. Too often, attempts to protect the constitutional rights of these students are dismissed as a threat to 'merit' or dangerous for social unity. This narrative makes discrimination seem normal and mocks voices for social justice.

Universities are more than just places to get a degree; they are supposed to be spaces where society evolves. Ensuring that everyone is included is not just a legal box to check, but also a moral requirement.

The UGC regulations or the regional versions like the Rohith Act are necessary remedies and a sign that the government is taking its responsibility toward social justice seriously. Without these institutional protections, the 'citadels of education' will continue to be private playgrounds for the social elite.

(The writer teaches at Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

The Arctic on the edge

As the ice sheet shrinks, its gravitational pull on surrounding ocean water weakens, causing local sea levels to drop, writes B K Singh

The Arctic is warming four times faster than the global average — a phenomenon called Arctic amplification. As sea ice retreats, dark ocean water absorbs solar radiation rather than reflecting it. Warmer Atlantic and Pacific currents push into the Arctic, while heat trapped near the surface cannot rise because vertical circulation is weaker at the poles than in the tropics. A warmer atmosphere holds more water vapour, itself a potent greenhouse gas. Thawing permafrost releases methane and carbon dioxide, compounding the feedback. The Arctic is not just responding to climate change — it is accelerating it.

The retreat of sea ice has opened shipping lanes that were once impenetrable, and the boom in maritime traffic is adding to the crisis. Ships emit black carbon, or soot, which settles on ice and reduces its reflectivity. Clean ice reflects up to 80% of solar radiation; soot-covered ice reflects barely half that.

In 2024, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) proposed requiring ships north of 60°N to use cleaner polar fuel, but adoption remains limited. France, Germany, Denmark, and the Solomon Islands have since pushed for stricter regulations, likely to come before the IMO's Pollution Prevention and Response Committee in April.

Meanwhile, the United States is moving in the opposite direction. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge — 1.5 million acres of pristine habitat in northern Alaska, home to nearly 200 wildlife species and the ancestral lands of the Inupiat and Gwichin peoples — has been opened for oil and gas drilling. Over 300 km of roads, blocked under the previous administration, have been ordered to be built to facilitate operations. Federal funding for Arctic climate research has been slashed.

An annual assessment by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration found that surface air temperature between October 2024 and September 2025 was the highest since records began in 1900. Toxic minerals have flooded rivers across northern Alaska, and last winter's sea ice reached its lowest annual maximum extent in 47 years. Erik Grafe of Earthjustice called it a sacrifice of unique landscapes to the oil industry at precisely the wrong moment in the climate fight.

A polar bear standing on a snow-covered iceberg surrounded by fast ice in Southeast Greenland. FILE PHOTO BY KRISTIN LAIDRE / AFP

The science being ignored is sobering. A team led by geophysicist Lauren Lewright at Columbia University has documented a counterintuitive phenomenon around Greenland: sea levels there are actually falling. Greenland is 80% covered by a mile-thick ice sheet that has literally depressed the landmass beneath it. As that ice melts — at roughly 200 billion tons per year — the land rebounds. The study estimates that Greenland is projected to gain 0.9 metres of newly exposed coastline by 2100.

But the relief is an illusion. As the ice sheet shrinks, its gravitational pull on surrounding ocean water weakens, causing local sea levels to drop even as global levels rise. For coastal communities, reduced sea levels bring their own disruptions to food security and livelihoods. And if Greenland's ice sheet were lost entirely, global sea levels would rise 2.5 metres.

Far from the ice, another climate buffer is under stress. Peatlands cover just 3% of Earth's surface but store 600 billion tons of carbon — more than all the planet's forests combined. As the Arctic warms, a process called Arctic greening is underway: receding ice exposes darker ground, which absorbs more heat, thereby enabling plants to advance northward into newly warm terrain.

Paleo-ecologist Josie Handley, lead author of a recent study, notes that things are getting greener and wetter. But the thawing permafrost beneath is releasing ancient carbon long locked in frozen soil. Extreme heat drives massive wildfires through shrubs, trees, and dried peat. Biogeochemist Angela Gallego-Sala of the University of Exeter is blunt: "We are already in extreme dry years, the peatlands are going up in fire." Carbon sequestered over millennia is returning to the atmosphere in seasons.

In the waters between Greenland and Canada, another fragile system is at risk. North Water Polynya — an expanse of ocean within Baffin Bay that never freezes — is sustained by converging currents and a natural ice arch to the north that holds back sea ice. The polynya produces nutrient-rich waters that support extraordinary biodiversity and the Inuit communities who have depended on it for generations. With unprecedented Arctic warming, the ice arch sometimes fails to form. The Inuit have urged the Canadian and Greenland governments to establish a marine protected area before the window closes.

The Arctic is not simply a distant ecosystem in distress. It is a system of systems — ice, ocean, permafrost, peat, people — each one interlinked, each one under pressure simultaneously. Decisions made in Washington, Brussels, and Beijing echo at the poles. The science is unambiguous; what remains is whether politics will catch up before the feedbacks become irreversible.

(The author is a former head of Forest Force, Karnataka, and an environment commentator)

DID YOU KNOW?

A shell with unusual physics

This photograph shows a remnant of a bygone era, when the wealthy in Goa used shells to cover windows without blocking light. The material behind it—the capiz shell—is finding renewed relevance today, as a subject of scientific and environmental interest.

Derived from the marine bivalve *Placuna placenta*, or the windowpane oyster, these shells are increasingly being discussed in research on sustainable materials, coastal ecosystems, and alternative resource use.

What sets capiz shells apart is their unusual physics. Unlike the thick, opaque shells of most oysters, they are thin, flat, and naturally translucent. Their structure, made of layered calcium carbonate, allows light to pass through while diffusing it softly, creating a natural glazing effect. Long before industrial glass became widely available, this property made capiz shells an architectural solution across tropical regions.

This species lacks the iridescence of pearl oysters and the culinary dominance of edible varieties like *Crassostrea*. It is a niche as a "biomaterial species," valued more for the physical properties of its shell than for food.

This distinction has made it popular in export-driven handicraft industries and sustainable designs. Today, it is drawing attention in design circles exploring low-energy, nature-based materials. It is used in chandeliers, lampshades and other decorative items.

However, in India today, capiz oysters are not legally cultivated, and their use remains limited. In 2023, Maharashtra police seized 30 tonnes of capiz shells, supposedly harvested in quantities exceeding the allowed limit. Their harvesting and trade fall under broader marine and wildlife regulations, and their sale is banned under Schedule IV of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

For the same reason, homes in Goa and other parts of India with century-old capiz shells on windowpanes find it difficult to replace them. With all limitations, the capiz shell remains both underutilised and insufficiently studied in the Indian context.

Recent scientific studies from the Philippines, where capiz shells are primarily found and used widely, have broadened the lens beyond aesthetics. Researchers examining *Placuna placenta* have highlighted its nutritional potential, noting that the edible portion—often discarded in shell-focused industries—is rich in protein and minerals.

Because these oysters inhabit estuaries and coastal shallows, they are vulnerable to the accumulation of heavy metals and other pollutants. Studies warn of declining populations due to overharvesting and habitat stress, raising questions about the long-term sustainability of the capiz shell trade.

- SHREE D N

Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground water Development, Division, Kashipur Circle, Shivamogga-577204.

Dated:17.03.2026 CALL-4/CALL-1 IFT No.: 50/2025-26.

SECTION 1-INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDERS (KW-1/3)

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation &Ground water Development Division, Shivamogga invites tenders in Standard Bid Document KW-1/3 through kpp- procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka, viz.,http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from eligible contractors for the work of coming under M.I sub-division SHIKARIPURA amounting from Rs.14.35 lakhs to Rs.80.64 lakhs Period of downloading tender documents from e-procurement portal: From 17.03.2026 to 24.03.2026 upto 17:00 hrs. Tender opening date at 17:15 hrs on 25.03.2026.. Any other details may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours on all working days.Details published on the e-procurement website @http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in are final.

Sd/- Executive Engineer M.I & G.W.D. Division, Shimoga.

DIPR/smg/KSMCA/25-26/116/03/2051

CITY CORPORATION BELAGAVI

C.T.S. No. 4821/26, 4821/27, R.S. No. 1005, Subhasha Nagara, Belagavi, Ph. : 0831-2405304, E-mail : itstaff_ulb_belgaum@yahoo.com, Website : www.belgaumcity.mrc.gov.in

No/CCB/PWD/EE/DM/TND/E-proc-25/2025-26 Dated:-20-03-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Commissioner, City Corporation Belagavi invites tenders in accordance with KTPP Act1999 Rules 2000 through Karnataka Public Procurement **Portal for 03 number of works approved under CMIDP, Rs.100.00 Crors Special grant (Phase -01) Grant and Amrut 2.0 Scheme.** For more details visit online website (https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in). Any Addendum/Corrigendum will be published in Karnataka Public procurement portal only.

1) Last date for Queries : 01-04-2026 upt to 5.00 PM. 2) Pre-bid meeting : 02-04-2026 at 11.00 AM in Office of the Commissioner, City Corporation Belagavi. 3) Last date for receipt of tender : 08-04-2026 upt to 4.00 PM. 4) Date for opening of technical bid: 10-04-2026 at 11.00 AM in Office of the Commissioner, City Corporation Belagavi. 5) Date for opening of financial bid: 13-04-2026 at 11.00 AM in Office of the Commissioner, City Corporation Belagavi.

Sd/- Commissioner, City Corporation Belagavi.

DIPR/Belagavi/2126/Manipal/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
U. R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL AIRPORT ROAD, VIMANAPURA POST, BENGALURU - 560 017 (Phone: 080 2508-4185, 4156)

BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

1.On behalf of the President of India, item- rate tenders are invited for the following works:

Description	Details	Details
Name of work	Remodelling of Old labs – Clean room for HMC lab at URSC Main Campus, Bengaluru – Civil, Electrical, AC & Mechanical Works – Phase-II.	Replacement of existing UPS LT Panels at AITF-1 and SEG buildings at URSC-ISITE Campus, Marathahalli, Bengaluru
E-Tender Notice	URSC/C&MG/E/C/23/2025-26 Dt.12/03/2026	URSC/C&MG/E/M/22/2025-26, Dt.16/03/2026
Estimated cost put to Tender	₹ 326.52 Lakhs	₹ 22.82 Lakhs
Period of completion in months	Eight (08) Months	Eight (08) Months
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**₹ 6,53,040/- valid for 180 Days**	**₹ 45,640/- valid for 180 Days**

2.Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details in **website:www.isro.gov.in** and download the tender documents from **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO**

Sd/- Group Director, C&MG, URSC

Government of Karnataka

KARNATAKA EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY

Sampige Road, 18th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560 012 Phone: 080-23 460 460 (5 Lines) e-mail:keauthority-ka@nic.in Website: https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/

No. ED/KEA/ REC/CR-01 /2026 Date: 18-03-2026

NOTIFICATION

PGCET-2026 - Admission to 1st Year / 1st Semester MBA, MCA, M.E., M. Tech., M. Architecture Courses

1. Online application is invited from the eligible interested Karnataka and non-Karnataka candidates for admission to 1st year / 1st semester full time / part time MBA, MCA, M.E. / M. Tech. / M. Architecture courses in the institutions affiliated Universities which will be notified by the Government of Karnataka for the year 2026-27.
2. Interested candidates have to appear for PGCET-2026 conducted by Karnataka Examinations Authority to become eligible for admission to **MBA, MCA, M.E. / M. Tech** courses as per 2005 and 2011 PGCET rules and its amendments.
   # M.E. / M.Tech examination will be conducted only for **Civil Engineering, Computer Science Engineering, Mechanical Sciences, and Electrical Sciences subjects.**

The Post Graduate Common Entrance Test-2026 Time Table is as follows:

Date	Timings	Admission to 1st Year / 1st Semester	Number of questions	Total Marks	Method of exam
23-05-2026 SATURDAY	2.30 pm to 4.30 pm	**# M.E. / M. Tech ***	100	100	PGCET will be conducted through OMR. Question paper will be of Objective Multiple Choice type.
24-05-2026 SUNDAY	10.30 am to 12.30 pm	MCA	100	100	
	2.30 pm to 4.30 pm	MBA	100	100	

(*Non-programmable calculators are allowed for M.E. / M.Tech. examination only)

3. SYLLABUS: PGCET-2026 syllabus is hosted on the KEA Website for the information of the candidates.
4. In accordance with the Government letter No. ED 161 TEC 2025 dated 27-06-2025, PGCET entrance examination will NOT be conducted for Bio-Technology, Chemical Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Polymer Science, and Textile Technology subjects, further for admission to these subjects based on the marks obtained in the respective Degree Examination; further,
5. For admission to M. Architecture courses, candidates should qualify in PGETA-2026 conducted by Council of Architecture, New Delhi and;
6. it is mandatory for the candidates to register online for Karnataka PGCET-2026, submit an online application and pay the application fee.
7. GATE qualified candidates in Engineering and Technology discipline are only eligible to take admission to Various M.Tech Programmes under VTU, Belgaum. The candidates with valid GATE score should compulsorily enter application online to become eligible for admission to M.E. / M. Tech / M. Architecture courses, **but they need not appear for PGCET-2026.**
8. Candidates who do not fulfil any of the eligibility clauses specified in the **PGCET-2026 e-Information Bulletin** will be considered **non-Karnataka candidates (clause-n).** Such candidates will be eligible for admission to **MBA/MCA programs only against the seats, if any, that are surrendered by the management during the admission process.** Please note that SC/ST/OBC eligibility criteria are applicable to Karnataka SC/ST/OBC candidates only.
9. Before registering through online for admission to PG courses, applicants have to compulsorily read Information Bulletin, detailed notification and understand the eligibility conditions, educational qualification, classification of seats and eligibility to claim such seats hosted on the KEA Website.
10. For admission to MBA / MCA / M.E. / M.Tech / M. Architecture courses through KEA for the year 2026, interested and eligible candidates have to register and apply online, **from 11.00 am onwards on 23-03-2026 up to 11.59 pm on 08-04-2026.** Fee has to be paid **on or before 10-04-2026.**
11. *All the admissions and undergraduate Degrees to claim eligibility for admission to any of the PG courses are subject to approval of the Government / VTU / other respective University.*
12. Candidates are advised to visit KEA Website **https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/** for more details notification regarding admission rules, eligibility clauses and various schedules.

Sd/- (H. Prasanna, IAS), Executive Director.

DIPR/CP/AAPL/6370/2025-26

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD

3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009.

Tender Notification

(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

Notification No: KHB/CE/AEF/S&S Works/Shivamogga/KHB/SE0354 Date: 10.03.2026

Karnataka Housing Board has invited tender through KPP Portal for Appointment of Architectural Engineering Firm (AEF) for the work of Proposed Development of sites and services scheme in an extent of 24 Acre 21 Guntas at Sy No.3/1,6/4,7/1,3,4,8/1 & Others, Devakatikoppa Village, Kasaba-2 Hobli, Shivamogga Taluk & District.

Last date for submission of bid is on 27.03.2026 upto 4.00 PM

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru. Telephone No: 080-22273511/080-22100077, Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6385/AKAR/2025-26

TOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MUDDEBIHAL

Tel: 08352-220876,

E-mail: itstaff_ulb_muddebihal@yahoo.co.in

No.TMC/SFC SPL GRANT/Notification/CR-/2025-26 Date:18.03.2026

Short Term E-Preocurement Tender Notification

Town Municipal Council Muddebihal Invites tender from eligible tenders registered in KPWD for the 01 work under SFC Special Grant 2024-25. Tender are called in standard tender Document KW-4 through KPP Portal. For further details visit online web site http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Note: Tender Corrigendum and Addendum will be issued in http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Portal only not in the newspapers.

1) DMS/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT56545

Calendar of Events:

1) Last date and time for Tender Queries/Clarifications: 27.03.2026, 16.30.

2) Last date and time for Receipt of Tenders : 30.03.2026, 17.00.

3) Date and time for Opening of Technical Bid: 01.04.2026, 11.00 AM.

4) Date and time for Opening of Financial Bid: 04.04.2026, 11.00 AM.

Sd/- Chief Officer TMC, Muddebihal **Sd/- Administrator TMC, Muddebihal**

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/829/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

BANGALORE URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYATH

Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, First Floor, Zilla Panchayat Building, S. Kariyappa Road, Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple), Bengaluru-560070

No.: EE/PRED/BNG(U)/TND/AE-1/45/2025-26 Date: 18.03.2026

KPPP TENDER NOTICE

Single Cover System

Tenders are invited through KPPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, for MP, MLA, 4202-01-201-1-08-139/422/423 & School Repairs-4202 Grants Works. The work details can obtained from the KPPP Web Site. The tender documents can be obtained and submitted on or before dated: **06.04.2026** upto **4:00 p.m.** Further details can be obtained from web site at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/-, Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Bangalore Urban Dist., Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/LC/6373/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜನೀಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಾರವಾರ

ಸಂ: ಕಾ.ನಿ.ಇಂ./ಲೋ.ಇ.ವಿ.ಕಾ/ಪಿ.ಬಿ–1/ಟೆಂಡರ–39/2025–26/5936 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18.03.2026

ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಹ್ವಾನ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್)

ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕೋಷ್ಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಿಸಿರುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜನೀಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ ಇವರಿಂದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಕೋಷ್ಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವದು. ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ವಹಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಹರಾಗಬೇಕಾದಲ್ಲಿ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು (ಕೆಡಬ್ಲೂ–1, 2 & 4) ರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸುವದು.

(1) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ವಿಚಾರಣೆಗೆ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿ: 26–03–2026 16.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ (2) ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿ: 27–03–2026 16.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ (3) ಟೆಂಡರನ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿ: 30–03–2026 17.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ (4) ಟೆಂಡರನ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿ: 01–04–2026 17.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು: ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ: **3054- MDR Maintenance During 2025-26 ವರ್ಕ ಇನಡೆಂಟ್ (1) PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT33002**

ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ: **3054- SH Bridge Maintenance During 2025-26 ವರ್ಕ ಇನಡೆಂಟ್ (1) PWD/2025-26/BG/WORK_INDENT29208**

ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ: **5054-80-190-0-01-132 KRDCL (Foot Bridge) During 2025-26 ವರ್ಕ ಇನಡೆಂಟ್ (1) PWD/2025-26/BG/WORK_INDENT34526**

ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ: **4059-80-051-0-60-132 CMIDP During 2025-26 ವರ್ಕ ಇನಡೆಂಟ್ (1) PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT32842**

(ಕೆಡಬ್ಲೂ–1,2&4) ರಲ್ಲಿನ ನಿಭಂದನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ e-proc ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾದ ನಿಭಂದನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಇಲಾಖಾ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂದರೆ **"https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in"** ನೋಡಬಹುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ **help desk Bangalore (Phone No. 918025501216 & 918025501227)** ಇವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/1234/25-26 dt.20.03.2026

(Govt of Karnataka)

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER P.W.D DIVISION SEDAM

No. EE/PWD/Dvn/Sed/TS-1&2/2025-26/3588 Date : 17-03-2026

-:: SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION ::-

1) Details of Works : 1. Total no of work 03 in under Sedam Indent No's are : 34385, 34034, 33842, 2. Total no of work 06 in under Chincholi indent No's are : 32034, 32009, 32033, 32489, 32493, 34953, 3. Total no of work 01 in under Chittapur indent No's are : 34670, 2) Head of Account : **Under KKRDB and 3054 SH maintenance For the year 2025-26.** 3) Amount Put to Tender : **Lowest Estimate Cost Rs. 150.00 Lakhs, Highest Estimate Cost Rs. 947.34 Lakhs,** 4) Eligibility of Contractor : Class-I contractor & Above, 5) Pre-Bid Meeting Date: **27-03-2026, Morning 11:30 Hrs,** 6) Date & time for Tender Queries of tenders : **30-03-2026 - 17:30:00 Hrs**, 7) Tender Form Fee & EMD Amount: Tender processing fee & EMD As per e-portal, 8) Last date & time for receipt of tenders: **01-04-2026 - 16:00:00 Hrs** 9) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid: **02-04-2026 - 16:30:00 Hrs**, 10) Date & Time for opening of Financial Bid: **04-04-2026 - 16:30:00 Hrs**, 11) Communication Address: Office of the Executive Engineer P.W.D Division Sedam, 12) Internet Address: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in 13) If any changes for Cancelation : Any Changes and cancelations are done in **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Note: 1) The undersigned has to power to postponement/rejecting the tenders, 2) If any changes are there in upcoming days These Tenders are not published in tender bulletin it should be read in https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Portal

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.W.D Division Sedam

DIPR/Kalaburagi/1198/KSMC&A/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Public Works Department)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Division: Yadgir.

GSTIN:29BLR002252F1DR

No.EE/PWD/Divn/YDG/TS-1/e-Tender/2025-26/ 3558, Dated:20.03.2026

Short Term e-Tender Notification

1) Details of works: On behalf of Governor of Karnataka as per KTPP Amendment 1999-2000 Act 2000 Standard Bid Document KW-2 & 4 Karnataka Public Works Department invited item Rate Tender under KPPP Portal in Two Cover System from Eligible Agency/Contractors for following works Under 3054 SH & MDR Maintenance for the year 2025-26 Under Shorapur Taluka-(1)34541, (2)34042, (3)34040 and (4)34764 CMIDP for the year 2025-26 (1)34047 and 5054 MDR Bridge for the year 2025-26 (1)27570/CALL-2 Totally 6 (Six) works Tender Called **2) Amount Put to Tender:** Miminimum Rs 50.00 Lakhs and Maximum Rs.200.00 Lakhs **3) Contractor Eligible Details:** Civil Class-III & Above **4) Tender Procesing Fee and EMD Details:**Tender Fee, EMD & Period as per kppp portal, **5) Last Date & Time for Tender Pre-Bid Meeting:** 25.03.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) **6) Last Date & Time for Tender queries/Clarification:** 27.03.2026 (Upto 17.30 hrs) **7) Last Date & Time for Reciept of the tender in e-KPPP portal:** 31.03.2026 (Upto 16.00 hrs) **8) Date & Time of Opening of the Tender/Technical Bid:** 01.03.2026 (16.30 hrs Onwards) **9) Date & Time of Opening of the Financial Bid:** 04.04.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) **10) For More Details Contact:** Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division : Yadgir. **11) Website Address:** https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

NOTE: Any Corrections / Changes will be updated in the kppp Portal only

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Yadgir.

DIP/YDG/606/KSMC&A/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ರಾಯಚೂರು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ

E-mail:itstaff_ulb_raichura@yahoo.com Website:-www.raichurcity.gov.in
Phone No:08532-226768 Fax No:08532-226316

ಸಂ.ರಾಮಪ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಕಾ/ಅ/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17–03–2026.

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ 2.0 ಪದ್ದತಿ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ).

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ, ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ತೋರಿಸಿದ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ ಸೇವಾ / ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ 2.0 ಪದ್ದತಿ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊರಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಇಚ್ಚಿಸುವ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು WWW.KPPP.Karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು, ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ WWW.raichurcity. mrc.gov.in ರಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕ್ರ. ಸಂ	ಅನುದಾನದ ವಿವರ	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ	ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ
1	2024–25, 2025–26 ಎಸ್.ಸಿ.ಪಿ ಕೆ.ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಡಿ.ಬಿ ಅನುದಾನ.	Request for proposal (RFP) for Selection of an NGO for the Community Engagement and Awareness Campaign to Address The Problem of Synthetic Toddy Consumption in Harijanwada 1, Harijanwada 2, and Devinagar wards in Urban Raichur- 2 year programme **Estimate Cost Rs.1,02,47,600/**	DMA/2025-26/ SE7491
2	ಅಮೃತ್ 2.0 ಅನುದಾನ.	Development Works in Mavinkere Azad Nagar, Ward No 04 in Raichur City **Estimate Cost Rs.2,87,00,000/-**	DMA/2025-26/ BD/WORK_ INDENT53013
4	ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ	Repair and Maintenance of UGD in Raichur City **Estimate Cost Rs.1,00,00,000/-**	DMA/2025-26/ WS/WORK_ INDENT56574

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ, ರಾಯಚೂರು.

DIP/RCR/775KSMCA/778/2025-26

Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation Limited (KUIDFC)

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

Nagarabhivruddhi Bhavan, No.22, 17th 'F' Cross, Old Madras Road, Indiranagar 2nd Stage, Near BMTC Bus Depot, Bengaluru - 560 038.
Phone: 91-80-25196100, 25196124 e-Mail: **info@kuidfc.com** Website: **www.kuidfc.com**

No.: KUIDFC/Admn/Tender/Security/CR-65/2025-26 Date: 18.03.2026

Short Term e-Tender Notification

KUIDFC Bengaluru invites tenders for hiring of **Security Personnel and drivers** for a period of **2 years** from the reputed manpower supplying Agency/Firm. The tender document will be available on e-Procurement portal of GoK **(i.e., https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** from **23.03.2026 to 06.04.2026 up to 17.30 hrs.** The bidders can view, download & upload the proposals only through e-Procurement portal. For any further notification please refer e-Procurement portal.

DIPR/DD-C.P/6362/KSMCA/2025-26 Sd/- General Manager (Admn)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರೂರಲ್ ಇನ್‌ಫ್ರಾಸ್ಟ್ರಕ್ಚರ್ ಡೆವಲಪ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಲಿಮಿಟೆಡ್

KARNATAKA RURAL INFRASTUCTURE DEVELOPMENT LTD.

(Formerly Karnataka Land Army Corporation Limited)
No.1106, 10th Main Road, RPC Layout, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru - 560040

No.EE-4/KRIDL/TENDER/2025-26/1274 Dated:20.03.2026

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of Managing Director, KRIDL, Executive Engineer, BBMP Division-4, invites e-tender through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP) for the works with Tender Reference No.(KRIDL/ 2025- 26/RD/WORK_INDENT 34, 35, 36, and 37 respectively) under two cover system with Approximate Project cost for each works amounting to Rs.995.00 Lakhs and EMD Amount of Rs.13.50 Lakhs. Interested Contractors/Firms who wish to participate in the tender can view, download and apply only through KPPP https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The schedule of specified Tenders are as under;

Tender Publish Date	**20.03.2026**
Last date and time for online queries	**27.03.2026, 17:30**
Date and time for Pre-Bid Meeting	**02.04.2026, 11:30**
Last date and time for receipt of tender	**09.04.2026, 15:00**
Date of Opening of Technical Bid & Time	**13.04.2026, 15:30**
Date of Opening of Financial Bid & Time	**21.04.2026, 15:30**

For more information,visit **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer-4 KRIDL, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6350/CCL/2025-26

Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department

Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.
Phone & Fax No : 08539-220054 email: eemidnkst@rediffmail.com

No:EE/MI&GWDD/Koppal/PB/TP/2025-26/5631 Dated: 20-03-2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal district invites tenders from the eligible tenderers registered civil contractors as per standard bid documents KW-1 on KPP portal for 8 no. of tender works pertaining to Raichur district The Approximate amount for the mentioned works Ranges between **Rs.11 Lakhs to 33.89 Lakhs**. **Two cover** tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTTP act shall be followed.

For more information the contractor can contact the under signed during office hours and all information regarding tenders can be had from website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/** The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website address on or after **23-03-2026.** Last date & time for receipt of tender is **30-3-2026 time 17.30 hours,** Pre bid meeting will be held on **27-03-2026, 11.00 Hours** at division office koppal, Date & time for opening of technical bid **01-04-2026 time 11.00 hours**, date and time for opening of financial bid **03-04-2026 time 11.00 hours** (If technical bid sanction is accorded by the competent authority).

Sd/-Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.

DIPR/Koppal/764/ DeshpandePublicity/2025-26

Government of Karnataka

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL DEVELOPMENT PANCHAYAT RAJ Engineering project Division KALABURAGI

No : EE/RDPRE/PD/KLB/KKRDB /TS/TND/2025-26/1012 Date : 18-03-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through E-procurement Single Cover System)

1.	Name of work & Amount put to tender	**1) KRRDA/2025-26/BG/WORK_INDENT 325 APT-Rs. 33,45,371.42 2) KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT 326 APT-Rs. 4629836.83**
2.	Head of account	**2025-26 year 5054**
3.	Class of Contractor	**Class-III & above**
4.	Issue of Blank Tender Documents	**18-03-2026 to 27-03.2026 upto 4.00 pm**
5.	Tender Form Fee	**As per KPPP Norms**
6.	E.M.D. Fee	**As Mentioned in KPPP Portal**
7.	Receipt of completed tender documents	**18-03-2026 to 27-03-2026 upto 4.00 pm**
8.	Technical Bid Opening Date	**30-03-2026 After 04.01 pm**
9.	Financial Bid opening Date	**30-03-2026 After 04:00 pm**
10.	For more details contact	**Office of the Executive Engineer, R.D.P.R.E. Project Division Rajapur Road Kalaburagi**
11.	Website Address	**www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Udaykumar Houde
Executive Engineer
R.D. P.R.E. Project Division
Kalaburagi

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement mode only)

KPTCL invites bids from the eligible bidders for the following works against Bid Enquiry Numbers.

No.CEE/Tr(Op)Z/KLB/SEE(O)/AEE-3/2025-26/15507,15477 & 15492 Date: 09.03.2026

(1) KPTCL/SS/2025-26/Hanumasagar replacement Dtd:12.08.2025 Call-4 for **Replacement of 2x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformers by 2x20MVA, 110/11kV transformers & providing additional switchgear at 110kV Hanumasagar sub-station in Kushtagi Tq., Koppal Dist**

(2) KPTCL/2025-26/SS/Navali Replacement/Call-5 for **"Replacement of 2x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformers by 2x20MVA, 110/11kV Power transformers and providing additional switchgear at 110/11kV Navali sub-station in Kanakagiri Taluk, Koppal District on Partial Turnkey Basis, including Supply of all Materials/Equipments (Excluding supply of 20 MVA power transformers and 11kV Switchgear) and Erection (Including dismantling & Civil Works) of all Materials/Equipments, Testing and Commissioning".**

(3) KPTCL/SS/2025-26/Venkatgiri replacement dated: 17.07.2025/ Call-5 for **"Replacement of 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformers by 1x20MVA, 110/11kV transformers & providing additional switchgear at 110kV Venkatagiri sub-station in Gangavathi Tq., Koppal Dist.**

No.CEE/Tr(Op)Z/KLB/SEE(O)/AEE-1/2025-26/15979 Date: 18.03.2026

(4)CEE/OPRZ/KLB/SEE(O)/AEE-1/2025-26/Services-13/ Manpower 10 no's. Maintenance of line works dtd:17.03.2026 for **"Outsourcing the services of 10 no's of Manpower required at 400kV TLM sub-division, KPTCL, Toranagallu by an external agency under the jurisdiction of Trans(Projects) Circle, KPTCL, Munirabad".**

The detailed Notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging **on or after 23.03.2026** to **www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyper Link **'E Procurement KPTCL'** or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Ele), Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, 1st Floor, Prasarana Bhavan, Sedam Road, Kalaburagi-585 105

PUDUCHERRY
Assembly Poll

Rangaswamy reaffirms alliance with BJP

CHENNAI, DHNS: After playing truant for a few days, Puducherry Chief Minister N Rangaswamy on Friday reaffirmed the alliance with the BJP for the April 9 Assembly elections and agreed to allot two seats to a new party launched by the elder son of lottery baron Santiago Martin.

With this, the confusion within the NDA in the Union Territory came to an end. The AINRC, led by Rangaswamy, will contest 16 seats, the BJP 10 and AIADMK and Latchiya Jananayaga Katchi of Jose Martin two each.

On the other side, the Congress and DMK were involved in hectic negotiations on the number of seats to be contested by each party in Puducherry. Congress' proposal of 13 seats for the DMK, 15 for the party, and the remaining two for allies has not gone down well with the Dravidian party, which is insisting on both parties contesting 14 seats each and deciding the Chief Minister after the polls.

Rangaswamy, who opposed the inclusion of Martin's son's party into the NDA, came around after Union Home Minister Amit Shah is believed to have spoken to him over the phone. On Friday, Rangaswamy filed his nomination papers from Thattanchavadi and Mangalam.

Sasikala, Ramadoss announce alliance

CHENNAI, DHNS: V K Sasikala, who launched the All India Puratchi Thalaivar Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AIPTMMK) last week, on Friday announced an alliance with the PMK faction led by S Ramadoss for the April 23 Assembly polls.

VK Sasikala

Sasikala and Ramadoss jointly announced the alliance at the latter's farmhouse in Thailapuram near Tindivanam, about 100 km from here. The development was expected after efforts by Sasikala and Ramadoss to join the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) failed to fructify.

Ramadoss, who has been sidelined by his son R Anbumani, who now controls the PMK, is likely to field candidates in Vanniyar-dominated northern Tamil Nadu. Ramadoss enjoys a demigod status among Vanniyars as he spearheaded the agitation in the late 1980s to secure Most Backward Class (MBC) status for the community.

CJI recuses from pleas on appointment of CEC, ECs

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant on Friday recused himself from hearing a batch of petitions challenging the validity of the 2023 law for excluding the head of the judiciary from the selection panel for appointing Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.

A bench of the CJI and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul Pancholi indicated that the matter would be reassigned to a bench on which none of the judges in line to assume the office of Chief Justice of India would be present.

The court was dealing with pleas contesting provisions of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, that removed the CJI from the appointment committee.

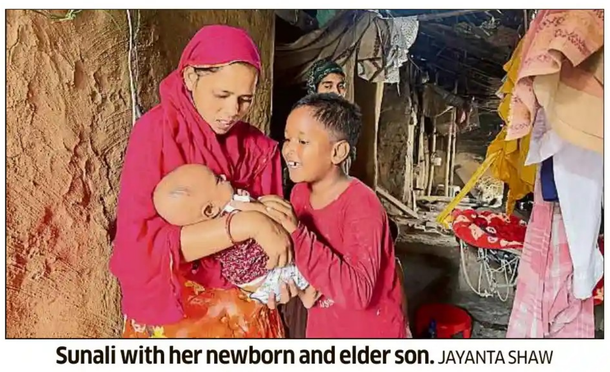
The CJI flagged the possibility of a conflict of interest in continuing to hear the case. The matter has now been listed for April 7 before a bench to be separately constituted.

In poll-bound Bengal, families fight for bread and belonging

People branded as 'Bangladeshis' despite identity proof and SC intervention

FROM THE GROUND

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
PAIKAR (BIRBHUM), DHNS


Sunali with her newborn and elder son. JAYANTA SHAW

Bhodu Sheikh squats in the narrow alley, his trembling finger pointing towards the mud shack behind him. "This is my ancestral home. My great-grandfather, my grandfather and my father lived here. I grew up here and raised my children here," the ailing 63-year-old mumbles. Then, with words heavy with pain and anguish, he adds, "They now question my identity as an Indian and want to brand my family as Bangladeshis!"

Inside the cramped shanty, where Bhodu, his wife and their family share space with a newly hatched brood of chicks, his daughter Sunali Khatun gently rocks her newborn son, Apon, to sleep in a makeshift hammock strung from the low asbestos ceiling. "My husband has not yet seen our baby," Sunali says, as her two other children huddle close beside her. "We could not afford anything new this Eid. We can barely manage two meals a day."

WEST BENGAL
Assembly Poll

The ordeal of the household at Paikar in the Murarai constituency of Birbhum reflects the identity insecurity haunting many in poll-bound West Bengal. Last year, a large number of the state's over 20 lakh migrant workers spread across Maharashtra, Odisha, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi were harassed and assaulted. Some were even detained by local police and deported to Bangladesh — allegedly without being given the chance to prove their Indian citizenship.

The search for livelihood took Sunali and her husband, Danish, to Rohini in Delhi, where she worked as a domestic help and he earned a living dealing in scrap. On June 18, 2025, the Delhi Police detained the couple, along with their young son, on suspicion of being illegal migrants from Bangladesh — allegedly disregarding the Aadhaar cards and other documents.

"Only because we spoke in Bangla among ourselves, the Delhi Police suspected us to be Bangladeshis," says Sunali.

Sweety Bibi, who also hailed from Paikar, was detained along with her minor sons. They were later handed over to the Border Security Force, which herded them aboard a special aircraft, flew them to Assam and then, in the darkness of night, sent them across the India-Bangladesh border.

"They had guns, and they told us that we would be shot if we tried to turn back to India, instead of going into Bangladesh," says Sunali, who, along with the others, spent several days in a jungle before being arrested by Border Guards Bangladesh.

The intervention by the TMC government in West Bengal, and an order from the SC, finally paved the way for the return of Sunali and her son to India on December 5. Her husband is still in Bangladesh.

"The case is before the Supreme Court. We will not rest till we bring back all our people whom the Bangla-Birodhi BJP governments illegally deported to Bangladesh," says Samirul Islam, a TMC member in the Rajya Sabha and the chairman of the West Bengal Migrant Welfare Board.

The BJP has made illegal migration from Bangladesh its main poll plank, accusing the ruling TMC of helping infiltrators settle in the state and turning them into vote bank.

"This is the land deed proving ownership of the land I inherited," says Bhodu, holding up a laminated piece of old paper. "It was issued in 1952. What more proof do they need to be convinced that we are citizens of this country?"

Welfare push, women-centric agenda as TMC seeks 4th term

KOLKATA, PTI: The TMC on Friday unveiled its manifesto for the West Bengal Assembly elections, focusing on welfare expansion, women and minority outreach, and targeted social schemes as it seeks a fourth consecutive term.

Releasing the document titled 'Banglar Jonno Didir 10 Protigya', Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee outlined 10 promises ranging from expansion of welfare schemes and healthcare outreach to infrastructure development and economic growth.

At the centre of the manifesto lies a Rs 500 hike in the 'Lakshmir Bhandar' scheme, regarded as the ruling party's most potent welfare programme, with the monthly aid promised to rise to Rs 1,500 for women from general category and Rs 1,700 for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries.

Women voters constitute nearly half of the state's electorate and have increasingly turned out in larger numbers than men in recent elections, a trend political observers say has significantly strengthened the TMC's electoral position since the scheme was introduced.

Underscoring the political importance of the constituency, Mamata said empowering women remained central to her government's agenda.

The manifesto proposes annual healthcare outreach under a new 'Duare Chikitsa' initiative, under which health camps will be organised in every block and town to provide doorstep medical services.

The TMC promised continued financial support for jobless youth through the Banglar Yuva-Sathi scheme with a monthly assistance of Rs 1,500.

Beyond governance promises, the manifesto reflects a carefully calibrated strategy aimed at reinforcing the party's core support base of women, minorities and marginalised communities.

The manifesto includes promises to protect and utilise Waqf properties for community welfare.

MANIFESTO

- TMC unveils 'Banglar Jonno Didir 10 Protigya'
- Promises Rs 500 hike in Lakshmir Bhandar scheme
- Mamata says mothers and sisters of Bengal must be self-reliant
- Annual health camps in every block/town
- Rs 1,500 monthly support for jobless youth

Three Gogois set to take on Himanta

Cong & Raijor Dal seal seat deal; BJP in pact with AGP & BPF

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

AHOM POWER

Gaurav, Akhil, Lurinjyoti unite against CM Sarma

Gaurav Gogoi faces BJP's Hitendra Nath Goswami in Jorhat

Raijor Dal to contest 13 seats, including two 'friendly fights'

Akhil Gogoi back in Sivasagar, where he won in 2021

Lurinjyoti Gogoi to fight from Khowang

The Opposition Congress and regional Raijor Dal have finally signed the seat-sharing deal for the April 9 Assembly elections in Assam, bringing three Gogois — Gaurav, Akhil and Lurinjyoti — to fight Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his team.

After several conflicts and a blame game over seat-sharing, Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi and Raijor Dal president and Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi on Thursday night announced that the Raijor Dal would contest 13 seats, including a friendly fight in two. Akhil will contest from Sivasagar in eastern Assam, from where he was elected in 2021 while still in jail on charges of sedition during the anti-CAA agitation.

ASSAM
Assembly Poll

The Congress has agreed to give Dhing, a Muslim-dominated seat in central Assam. The Raijor Dal had earlier said that seat-sharing talks between the two parties collapsed due to the Congress' reluctance to leave the seat.

The Opposition camp now has the Congress, Raijor Dal, Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP), CPM, CPI (ML) and All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC). The Badruddin Ajmal-led AIUDF, however, is out of the Congress-led Opposition alliance.

Lurinjyoti Gogoi, former general secretary of the All Assam Students' Union, heads the AJP. Lurinjyoti will contest in Khowang while Gaurav will have a straight fight against former Speaker and senior BJP leader Hitendra Nath Goswami in Jorhat.

The Congress has named candidates for 88 of the total 126 seats, the AJP for 10, while the CPI (ML) and APHLC will contest two each. Candidates for the remaining seats have not yet been announced.

"Our aim is to defeat the BJP and make Gaurav Gogoi the next CM," Akhil said.

The Congress-Raijor Dal alliance brings three Gogois together — a move that could boost the Opposition camp in eastern Assam, where voters from ethnic communities largely determine outcomes. The Gogois belong to the Ahom community, which holds sway in many seats.

The BJP and allies are confident of performing well in eastern Assam, citing their "anti-infiltrator" measures, including evictions and push-backs of illegal migrants.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma takes part in a rally en route to file nomination in Guwahati on Friday. PTI

After Assam exodus, 21 ex-Cong leaders on BJP list

GUWAHATI, DHNS: Is the BJP becoming the new Congress in Assam? That has become the buzz in state politics, given the frequent exodus of leaders from the Opposition Congress to the ruling BJP.

The trend began in 2015, when Himanta Biswa Sarma switched to the BJP after leading the dissidents against then CM Tarun Gogoi. Since then, it has continued, particularly in the run-up to elections.

This time is no different, with two top Congress leaders, Bhupen Kumar Borah and Pradyut Bordoloi, jumping ship days ahead of the polls. Three MLAs — Kamalakshya Dey Purkayastha, Sasikanta Das and Basanta Das — who were suspended by Congress last year, also formally joined the BJP on March 5.

Such an exodus ahead of every election since 2015 has become a major worry for the Opposition camp. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the BJP high command have continued to accommodate former Congress colleagues, even as this has disappointed several old and prominent leaders within the party.

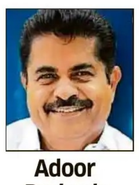
The trend became more glaring in the list of 88 candidates the BJP released on Thursday for the April 9 polls. At least 21 former Congress leaders, including 11 MLAs, figured in the list

On Friday, CM Sarma filed his nomination papers from Jalukbari in Guwahati, seeking a mandate as MLA for the sixth consecutive term.

Bordoloi, who joined the BJP on Wednesday, was given the ticket for the prestigious Dispur Assembly seat the very next day.

Cong relieved as seniors make no spoilsport moves

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS


Adoor Prakash

K Sudhakaran

The Congress camps in Kerala heave a sigh of relief as the inner party issues over candidate selection, which could have played the spoilsport for the party's prospects in the Assembly elections, have been sorted out quite amicably.

Congress MPs K Sudhakaran and Adoor Prakash, who were keen to contest in the Assembly polls, finally conceded to the party's general understanding that sitting MPs shall not contest. The two leaders also stated that the party leadership's decision was final and they would work for the party's victory in the state.

This indeed brought the Congress back to the right track.

The inner party issues, which led to the delay in finalising the candidates, had even triggered a series of speculations that Sudhakaran may contest as a rebel from his home turf of Kannur. Upset Congress supporters even came out in the open against the senior leaders for playing the spoilsport. Many had made social media posts criticising Sudhakaran for insisting on the seat instead of working for the party's victory.

KERALA
Assembly Poll

Veteran Congress leader A K Antony also rang up Sudhakaran and reminded him that the priority should be to bring back the Congress to power in Kerala and to prevent a third term for the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left Democratic Front. Resentment was also brewing among other coalition parties in the United Democratic Front (UDF).

With issues being settled amicably, Opposition leader V D Satheesan said that a section of the media, which was acting at the behest of the CPM, was trying to create a narrative that all was not well in the Congress.

Satheesan said that compared to earlier years, seat sharing among the UDF coalition partners and the selection of Congress candidates went off quite smoothly this time. He also reiterated that UDF would ensure a thumping victory by securing over 100 seats in the 140-member Assembly.

The UDF could indeed finalise all the candidates ahead of the LDF and the BJP-NDA. The last date for filing nominations for the April 9 polls in Kerala is March 23.

AIADMK, NDA leaders visit Delhi for seat-sharing talks; DMK takes potshots

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Seat-sharing talks in the NDA have shifted to New Delhi with AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami travelling to the national capital to hold negotiations with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, signifying the key role that the BJP has assumed in Tamil Nadu, where the party is yet to find a foothold.

After Palaniswami, other key leaders of the NDA—R Anbumani of PMK and AMMK's T T V Dhinakaran and TN BJP chief Nainar Nagenthiran—will also meet Shah on Friday to discuss the broad contours of the seat-sharing arrangement between constituents of the alliance.

TAMIL NADU
Assembly Poll

This was Palaniswami's third visit to New Delhi in three months to meet Shah to discuss the strategy for the April 23 Assembly elections. Thursday's visit triggered a sharp reaction from Chief Minister M K Stalin, who asked people to think deeply about what would happen to the state if the Opposition alliance wins the elections.

On his part, Palaniswami defended his New Delhi visit, saying he decided to travel since Shah was busy with elections in five states. During the meeting, it is believed that the number of seats to be contested by the BJP and other alliance partners—especially the constituencies—was largely decided.

The deal between AIADMK and BJP is likely to be signed during Union minister and party's election in-charge Piyush Goyal's visit beginning Saturday.

Parl panel asks UPSC to review aptitude test paper

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A Parliamentary panel has urged the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to review the existing Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT) paper for the Civil Services preliminary exam, saying it poses challenges for candidates from non-science and non-quantitative academic backgrounds.

The recommendation was made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice in its report on the Demands for Grants (2026-27) of the Department of Personnel and Training tabled in Parliament recently.

During the deliberations, the multi-party committee headed by senior BJP MP Brij Lal said the members felt the quantitative and analytical orientation of the CSAT paper may pose challenges for candidates from non-science and non-quantitative academic backgrounds, especially those from remote and under-served regions with limited access to specialized preparatory support.

It said the panel believes that the objective of the Civil Services Examination has historically been to attract talent from diverse academic disciplines, and feels that the design and level of the CSAT paper may warrant review to ensure a level playing field.

While acknowledging the importance of assessing analytical ability, comprehension and decision-making skills in prospective civil servants, the committee said it was of the view that the preliminary examination should ensure a level playing field for candidates from varied academic streams.

"Although the CSAT paper is qualifying in nature, the Committee recommends that the Union Public Service Commission undertake a comprehensive review to rationalize the CSAT component, including its syllabus and level of difficulty, so as to assess its impact across different academic backgrounds," the report said.

No community should face hate speech: SC

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The SC on Friday said that hate speech against any community has no place in the country, emphasising that harmony depends on education, intellectual growth, tolerance and patience.

It also underscored that once the principle of fraternity is embraced by all, the problem of hate speech will automatically cease to exist.

The court declined to entertain a plea that sought to recognise hate speech targeting the Brahmin community as a punishable offence, describing the tendency as 'Brahmophobia'.

The Supreme Court said it was not keen to entertain the plea argued by Mahalingam Balaji.

"We don't want hate speech against any community in the country. It depends on education, intellectual development, tolerance, and patience. Once everyone follows the fraternity, automatically there will be no hate speech," the court said.

HEALTH PUSH

T'gana to serve free breakfast in schools

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Despite Opposition claims of improper implementation of the 2023 Assembly poll promises under the 'Six Guarantees', the Congress government in Telangana introduced new schemes on Friday.

The government launched a new breakfast scheme, which will be introduced from the 2026-27 academic year, for students from pre-primary to intermediate, offering milk three days a week and ragi malt the rest, with an allocation of Rs 800 crore.

The mid-day meals programme has also been extended to intermediate colleges.

The government also announced the Indiramma Family Life Insurance Scheme, providing Rs 5 lakh life cover to all 1.15 crore families across income groups, starting June 2.

Announcing the new schemes, while presenting the annual budget, Deputy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that the government is extending a new Midday Meal Scheme to students pursuing Intermediate education in Government Junior Colleges.

Further, through the Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Limited , established to provide safe overseas employment opportunities to the state's youth, about 13,930 young people have been provided jobs in 16 countries, including the UAE, Germany, Japan, the UK, and Canada.

He added that select government institutions will be upgraded into Telangana Public Schools, equipped with modern infrastructure.

Centre proposes panel to review chapter in NCERT book, SC told

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Centre on Friday informed the Supreme Court that it has proposed constituting an expert committee to review NCERT's controversial chapter on judicial corruption.

The panel will comprise senior advocate and former Attorney General K K Venugopal, former Supreme Court judge Justice Indu Malhotra, and National Judicial Academy Director and former Supreme Court judge Justice Aniruddha Bose.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta made the submissions before a bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul Pancholi.

The bench was hearing a plea by Dr Pankaj Pushkar seeking the removal of certain other observations regarding a Supreme Court judgment from the old social science textbook of NCERT.

"We have appointed a committee; we have requested former AG Venugopal, and he has accepted," Mehta said.

He added that the former AG will be a member of the committee in drafting the chapter, and Justice Indu Malhotra will be the judge.

The court had earlier directed the Union government to constitute a committee of domain experts to finalise the curriculum related to legal studies in NCERT textbooks.

NCERT's proposed Class 8 social science textbook kicked off a row over a chapter dealing with corruption in the judiciary.

The court took suo motu cognizance of the matter and banned the book.

On March 11, the court said that it was worried by the stand of NCERT that the controversial chapter, which contained "offending" content on corruption in the judiciary in the Class 8 social sciences book, has been "rewritten" and that the revised chapter will be incorporated in the textbooks for the 2026-27 academic year.

SC grants bail to accused in Andhra liquor policy scam

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday granted regular bail to Muppidi Avinash Reddy, a key accused in the multi-crore Andhra Pradesh liquor policy scam related to alleged large-scale irregularities and a structured kickback network that operated between 2019 and 2024.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi invoked its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to mould the relief of regular bail instead of anticipatory bail to the petitioner, after noting that he had already surrendered after returning from abroad and had undergone custodial interrogation.

Senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing for the state government, opposed granting relief to the petitioner. The bench, however, said that it was a case of ego satisfaction. Refuting this, Luthra said the accused had returned in terms of what he had committed to the SC and that his police custody had been granted.

Unseasonal rain, hailstorms: Govt orders crop damage assessment

Agencies told to ensure proper evaluation and insurance processing

A farmer inspects damaged wheat crops after unseasonal rains and gusty winds at Ramuwal village in Amritsar on Friday. PTI

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With unseasonal rainfall and hailstorms damaging standing rabi crops, including wheat, in many states, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday directed officials to coordinate with state governments to assess crop losses.

Chairing a meeting to review the agricultural situation, the minister directed officials to immediately establish contact with state governments to identify specific locations where crop damage has occurred due to hailstorms and excessive rainfall, which often leads to crops lodging or flattening on the ground. The adverse weather had hit several states at a time when rabi crops were ripe and ready for harvest.

While state governments provide assistance through their respective State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF), Chouhan said he has specifically instructed officials overseeing the Crop Insurance Scheme to coordinate with states to ensure crop-cutting experiments are conducted properly and the extent of damage is accurately assessed.

"If a farmer has suffered losses, the damage must be assessed accurately and scientifically so that insurance claims can be processed effectively," he told reporters.

The India Meteorological Department has warned of two additional western disturbances, Chouhan added. On procurement, the minister said that government purchase of wheat and paddy would commence shortly, noting that rabi crop production has been exceptionally high this season.

On pulses, tur, masur and urad, he said agencies, including NAFED and NCCF, would procure whatever farmers wished to sell, ensuring market prices do not fall below the Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Chouhan also stressed the need to shift focus from quantity to quality, citing premium wheat varieties such as Madhya Pradesh's Sarbati, which commands a market premium of over Rs 400, as a model for promoting high-value grain production.

Govt to table Bill in RS to retain IPS deputation in CAPFs

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The government is set to bring a Bill in the Rajya Sabha to maintain the existing system of deputation of IPS officers in paramilitary forces, overriding a Supreme Court order.

The Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026 has been circulated among Rajya Sabha MPs, seeking to regulate the general rules governing the recruitment and conditions of service of Group A General Duty Officers and other officers.

According to the Bill, 50 % of Inspectors General and 67% of Additional Directors General in paramilitary forces will be filled through deputation. The posts in the ranks of Special Director General and Director General shall be filled by deputation only, it said. It has been brought to override a May 2025 Supreme Court judgment that ruled for progressively reducing IPS deputation up to the rank of Inspector General in paramilitary forces within two years so that direct recruits could get promotions.

Airlines oppose govt's 60% free seat selection move

NEW DELHI, PTI: IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet have raised strong objections to the government's decision asking airlines not to levy any charges for the selection of at least 60% seats on flights, saying the move will force them to hike airfares.

The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which represents the three airlines, has also urged the Civil Aviation Ministry to take steps to withdraw the decision.

On Wednesday, the ministry announced that directions have been issued to the DGCA to direct airlines to allocate a minimum of 60% of seats for selection on any flight free of charge to ensure fair access for passengers. In a letter written to Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha on Thursday, the FIA said the direction would have unintended and adverse consequences.

"The financial impact of the directive on airlines will be significant, compelling airlines to recover the lost revenues through increases in fares. As a result, all passengers, including those who may not wish to preselect seats, will end up paying higher fares," it said.

The FIA said seat selection fees form a legitimate component of revenue, particularly in the high-cost environment where costs rise year-on-year under the regulator AERA-governed regime that accords full cost recovery plus an assured margin to airports.

AI's Vancouver-bound plane returns to Delhi after 7 hours

NEW DELHI, PTI: After being airborne for over seven hours, an Air India plane from Delhi to Vancouver returned to the national capital on Thursday evening due to an operational issue.

Without providing specific details, Air India, in a statement on Friday, said the aircraft landed safely at the Delhi airport.

The plane turned back to Delhi when it was in the Chinese airspace, according to information available on the flight tracking website Flightradar24.com.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

THERE ARE SO MANY NEW ONES NOW, I CAN'T DECIDE WHICH ONE TO GET MY SON FOR CHRISTMAS
OH, THEY ALL DO THE SAME THING, ANYWAY
OK, THEN I'LL TAKE THIS ONE
OH, I WOULDN'T GET THAT ONE!
12-10
THIS ONE ONLY DOES ABOUT HALF THE SAME THINGS AS THE OTHER ONES DO!

Hagar The Horrible

IT'S NICE AND CALM!
FOR NOW!
BUT IT'S ONLY BEEN FIVE MINUTES SINCE THE CREW SWALLOWED YOUR DINNER!
I FEEL SOMETHING BUBBLING UP!
ME TOO!

Beetle Bailey

WHAT ARE YOU READING ?
I'M TAKING A CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE
YOU ACTUALLY HAD AN EDUCATION TO CONTINUE ?
GREG + MORT WALKER
11/27

Peanuts

WHY SHOULD IT BE SO HARD TO GET A BLANKET FROM A CAT?
I DON'T SEE WHY I CAN'T TAKE THIS POLE, AND JUST REACH RIGHT OVER THERE AND...
SLASH
10/21

Marvin

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OPERV

SIBSL

BNAAAC

TCALET

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: FLICK ISSUE MOTIVE BOTTOM
Answer: When the sprinter talked about his world records, he was remembering the — BEST OF TIMES

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◆SU-DO-KU-6859◆

					9			1
	6						2	
					4	8	6	
3		4		7		6		
6				2				9
		7		6		4		5
	5	3	1					
	1						7	
9			3					

hard

SOLUTION TO 6858

4	3	5	6	7	9	1	2	8
2	1	6	8	5	3	7	4	9
7	9	8	2	4	1	5	3	6
6	2	4	1	9	5	3	8	7
3	5	9	4	8	7	2	6	1
8	7	1	3	2	6	9	5	4
9	8	2	7	3	4	6	1	5
5	6	3	9	1	8	4	7	2
1	4	7	5	6	2	8	9	3

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

HITORI-3313

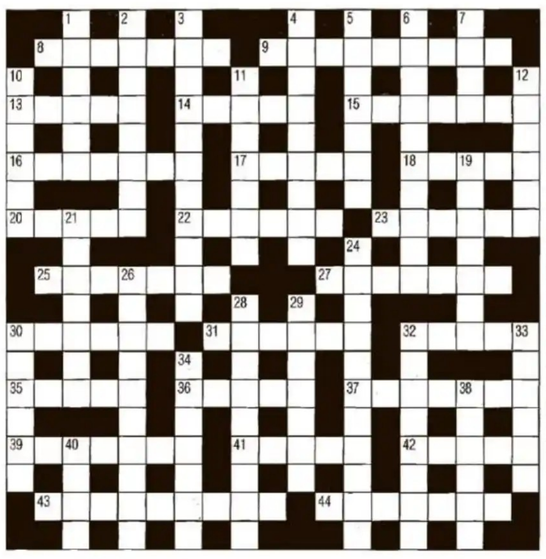
4	8	3	6	1	6	8	7
2	5	7	6	4	4	7	3
3	7	1	7	7	2	5	4
6	3	4	2	5	1	1	8
8	4	6	7	3	7	4	7
8	1	4	4	7	8	7	2
5	6	2	8	4	7	3	1
1	8	7	7	2	7	1	1

SOLUTION TO 3312

■	1	2	■	3	5	■	4
1	5	■	2	6	■	4	8
4	■	7	5	1	2	8	3
7	4	1	■	8	3	2	■
■	6	■	4	■	7	■	5
6	2	5	8	4	■	3	7
5	3	■	1	2	8	7	6
■	8	4	■	5	■	1	2

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 4032



ACROSS
8 Play with songs (7)
9 Pilot's safety device (9)
13 Pinafore (5)
14 Vice (5)
15 Kettledrums (7)
16 Police, informally (3,4)
17 Benefactor (5)
18 Greek letter (5)
20 Soil (5)
22 Cargo ship (6)
23 Flower (6)
25 Fruit (7)
27 Quiet (7)
30 Dessert (6)
31 Fault (6)
32 Navigation aid (5)
35 Reverie (5)
36 Pick-me-up (5)
37 Curl (7)
39 Supernatural (7)
41 Odds of 1 to 1 (5)
42 Blemish (5)
43 Competitor (9)
44 Melodic (7)

DOWN
1 Rotten (6)
2 Monstrous (8)
3 Sum (11)
4 Wood-worker (9)
5 Power source (7)
6 Ape (10)
7 Sicilian volcano (4)
10 Conditional release (6)
11 Young pilchard (7)
12 Insect (6)
19 Aquatic bird (7)
21 Cold-blooded creature (7)
24 Scenic (11)
26 Light (10)
28 Wandered (9)
29 Master (7)
30 Boredom (6)
32 Ominous (8)
33 Sailor (6)
34 Remaining (7)
38 Sporting association (6)
40 Black bird (4)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
8 Understanding, egg on verbally (7)
9 Does it take flight when it sees a saw? (5,4)
13 Like the book, "The Jewel", that's not abridged? (5)
14 The man said to have been mauled by the lion (5)
15 Named, we're told, as having been seen (7)
16 Book-keep (7)
17 The large one with the elastic (5)
18 To which the wife consigned her photo? (5)
20 Black and blue (5)
22 Season the water (6)
23 Says the point is against (6)
25 Will it help one not to lag behind others at table? (7)
27 The draught is water (7)
30 A strange logo, good gracious! Dreary (6)
31 Straight after, call home (6)
32 Journalists are importunate (5)
35 She'll come back when ready (5)
36 Open at the above time (5)
37 There's no way booze is a cure! (7)
39 Guaranteed to be convinced in the end (7)
41 Good and angry, said what one thought of (5)
42 Get confused and put two Ds in "drink" (5)
43 With passion, start performing in and be very good (5,4)
44 Believe it gets rid of flies (7)

DOWN
1 Does give a rap when one's uncomplimentary about! (6)
2 How you regretted biting into the lemon? (8)
3 Gets frightened on finding the eggs hatched (8,3)
4 The boys get on with difficulty, carrying the bag (9)
5 Flavouring, I understand, goes in as well (7)
6 What makes you so hot on performing? (5,5)
7 Either didn't remove or took off (4)
10 Upturned, the dirt is caked on – really bad (6)
11 Do they speak your name on the telephone? (7)
12 Cling to – had come loose before (6)
19 Get all the notes sorted out and make plans (7)
21 Works out, when the snares set have caught nothing (7)
24 Decreasing the felling of (7,4)
26 Gave the impression, when one happened on (4,6)
28 Because the estate's to be broken up, getting a preview (9)
29 Fix up and put into safekeeping again (7)
30 Deduce from, when you convene (6)
32 Not so wonderful that you can't leave behind? (8)
33 Some months, he reckons (6)
34 Is amazed and angry, caught up in the snowdrift (7)
38 Very keen, when the herd stampedes, to run (3-3)
40 That's wrong, pop (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12377

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 4, Fig-h-ts 7, Revolver 8, Isla-nd 10, Poise 13, Pa-I-l 14, Ella 15, GI-R-L 16, Pry 17, B-rat 19, E-ire 21, Crescendo 23, Su-es 24, Hate 26, Opt 27, Eve-R 29, Alas 32, Oner 33, Blig-h 34, Treats 35, Tomorrow 36, Persia.
DOWN: 1, Tripe 2, Avail 3, Blue 4, Friar 5, G-all 6, Tenure 9, Silent 11, Ole 12, Sabre (dance) 13, Pitcher 15, Gas 16, Pro 18, Resent 20, I'd-eal 21, Cut 22, Ear 23, Sparse 25, Hag 28, Vesta 30, Li-b-ra 31, S-how-N 32, Oats 33, BL-ob.

EASY
ACROSS: 4, Wombat 7, Umbrella 8, Gentry 10, Earth 13, Rent 14, Sits 15, Best 16, Dip 17, Abut 19, Amid 21, Tradition 23, Must 24, Roll 26, Hug 27, Tree 29, Acid 32, Alas 33, Prime 34, Lancet 35, Estimate 36, Jewels.
DOWN: 1, Dupes 2, Abort 3, Mesh 4, Wages 5, Mint 6, Afraid 9, Entail 11, Aim 12, Tsars 13, Retires 15, Bud 16, Din 18, Battle 20, Molar 21, Tug 22, Toe 23, Mutate 25, Him 28, Rates 30, Cigar 31, Defer 32, Ache 33, Pail.

SCRABBLE™

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N1	M3	U1	E1	A1	R1	S1	1st Letter Double	RACK 1
C3	E1	A1	I1	T1	N1	N1	4th Letter Triple	RACK 2
A1	I1	P3	R1	N1	S1	P3		RACK 3
I1	T1	R1	D2	L1	E1	F4	Triple Word Score	RACK 4

PAR SCORE 175-185
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

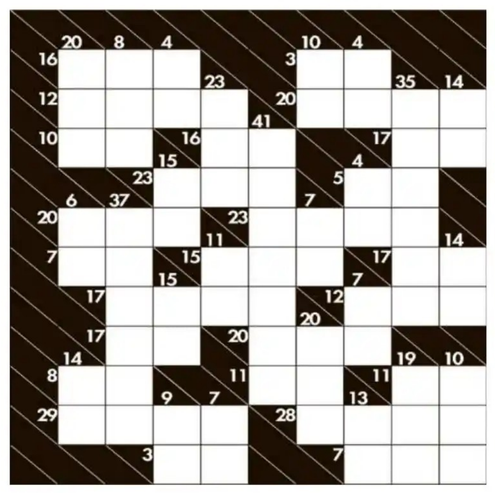
DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

I1	N1	D2	I1	C3	T1		RACK 1	= 9
G2	R1	A1	N1	I1	T1	E1	RACK 2	= 58
S1	U1	R1	T1	A1	X8		RACK 3	= 39
P3	H4	O1	T1	O1	N1	S1	RACK 4	= 86

PAR SCORE 125-135 JUDD'S TOTAL 192

KAKURO- 3313



SOLUTION TO 3312

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3861

■		2			7			1
	6					5	■	
		■				■	7	
			■		■	9	8	3
				3		6		
			■	8	2		5	
4		6				8	9	
	■		5		8	1	■	
		1						■

SOLUTION TO 3860

3	8	5	9	2	1	7	4	6
1	7	6	8	4	5	2	3	9
4	2	9	3	7	6	5	1	8
9	4	2	5	1	7	6	8	3
5	1	7	6	8	3	9	2	4
6	3	8	4	9	2	1	5	7
8	6	1	2	3	9	4	7	5
7	9	4	1	5	8	3	6	2
2	5	3	7	6	4	8	9	1

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

DECCAN HERALD
Saturday
March 21, 2026

n Malleswaram, despite festive delicacy, production ue to shortage of commercial rs. DH FILE PHOTO

hortage s festive his time

are becoming unbearable for the kitchen staff.

The situation is worse for non-vegetarian hotels, especially during the festive season traditionally marked by meat feasts. "We cannot make deep-fried items like kebabs on wood fires, the temperature control isn't there, and the food gets charred," explained a hotel owner in Rajajinagar.

The price of cylinders in the black market has skyrocketed. While a 19-kg commercial cylinder is nearly impossible to procure, some consumers reported being asked to pay as much as Rs 8,000. In desperation, many small eateries have switched to 5-kg cylinders, which run out in a matter of hours.

The Bruhat Bangalore Hotels Association (BBHA) and hotel owners have now written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking an urgent intervention. The letter highlights the threat to the livelihoods of thousands of staff members and requests an audience to discuss the immediate restoration of commercial LPG supplies.

At several agencies across the city, boards have been put up displaying a disparity between demand and supply. "We have over 5,100 bookings pending, but our current stock is barely 460 cylinders," said an agency manager in the city.

"Earlier, we received two loads a day, now we are lucky if we get one load every two days. We are prioritising old bookings from early March, but the public is getting restless and aggressive."

G: Siddaramaiah s intervention

taken steps to regulate allocation for essential segments in line with the Centre's guidelines, but the situation remains critical.

Siddaramaiah also flagged the absence of an integrated monitoring system for commercial LPG distribution, in contrast to the existing IT system for domestic gas supply, leading to gaps in transparency and oversight.

He further mentioned that supply of auto LPG, a key fuel for autorickshaws that serve as a key link in last-mile connectivity in Bengaluru, had also been impacted owing to the lack of a monitoring mechanism.

Siddaramaiah said, "I request your kind intervention to ensure adequate allocation and availability of commercial LPG and Auto LPG to Karnataka, keeping in view the operational requirements and unique dependency patterns of the state, especially the city of Bengaluru."

data

-day trip to Russia where cial delegation, led by ourism secretary Salma , attended the Moscow ational Travel & Tourism ition.

ebruary 2026, Horticulture tary Girish R went to Ger- and the UK for eight days to l the Fruit Logistica at a cost 5 lakh.

ording to information by Siddaramaiah, officials he state visited at least 27 ries. This included destina- ike Marrakech (Morocco), ronga Zoo in Sydney (Aus- and Gaborone (Botswana).

LPG bookings fall as supply monitoring continues

Govt says domestic supply normal despite earlier panic bookings

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Despite ongoing concerns and supply restrictions on commercial consumers, including hotels, domestic LPG supply remains normal across the country.

In a relief for oil marketing companies, domestic LPG cylinder bookings fell to 55 lakh per day on March 19, down from more than 80 lakh per day just a few days earlier. "Panic booking is coming down. On March 19, around 55 lakh bookings were made," Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, told reporters here.

The pre-war average daily bookings stood at 50–55 lakh.

However, she cautioned that "the LPG supply situation remains worrisome, though there is no dry-out at any LPG distributor." The government continues to prioritise the supply of available LPG to domestic households, she said.

She noted that domestic LPG production has increased by over 40% in the last two weeks, and the three public sector oil marketing companies have resumed normal pre-war levels of daily LPG refill deliveries. "LPG cylinder delivery continues to be normal," she said.

Supplies to commercial establishments were initially halted but have since been partially restored to about one-fifth of their normal requirement. In the last week, 11,300 tonnes of commercial LPG were supplied to such establishments across the country.

To curb black marketing and hoarding, raids and surprise inspections are continuing. As many as 4,500 raids were conducted on Friday, while oil companies carried out 1,800 surprise inspections of petrol pumps and LPG distributorships.

People wait with empty LPG cylinders to avail refilled ones, in Prayagraj, on Friday. PTI

Indian dies in Riyadh; West Asia toll rises to six, one missing

NEW DELHI, DHNS: With one more Indian killed in an Iranian attack on Riyadh this week, the total number of Indian fatalities in Gulf countries has risen to six since the conflict in West Asia began three weeks ago.

"We received information regarding the demise of an Indian national during an attack in Riyadh on March 18," Aseem R Mahajan, Additional Secretary (Gulf), Ministry of External Affairs, told the media.

However, he did not elaborate upon the circumstances of the death.

"Our mission in Riyadh is in touch with the family and closely coordinating with local authorities for the early return of the mortal remains to India," he said.

On Friday, the Indian Embassy in Riyadh said that an Indian national was killed in Saudi Arabia due to the "recent events of March 18".

Mahajan said that a total of six Indian nationals have lost their lives since the start of the war, and one remains missing across different Gulf countries.

Earlier, the Indian embassy said alerts were received by residents in Riyadh and some other regions on Wednesday. "The Indian community is advised to remain calm and composed," the embassy said.

"Our missions in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Iraq, and the UAE are in regular touch with the authorities concerned regarding the missing Indian national and for the early repatriation of mortal remains of the deceased Indian nationals to India," he said.

The West Asia conflict began on February 28 when the US-Israel combine launched military strikes on Iran. In retaliation, Tehran has targeted Gulf countries hosting US military bases. Since February 28, around three lakh passengers have returned from the region to India, Mahajan said.

DGCA asks airlines to avoid 9 airspaces

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Amid the ongoing conflict involving the United States-Israel coalition and Iran, India's aviation regulator has advised airlines to avoid nine airspaces in West Asia and the Persian Gulf as a precautionary measure following the latest safety-risk assessments.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation's advisory follows a review of the Conflict Zone Information Bulletin published by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

"Recent military strikes conducted by the United States and Israel against targets within Iranian territory have led to a high-risk environment for civil aviation. In response to these strikes, Iran has announced retaliatory measures," the DGCA told all Indian air operators, stakeholders and flight operations departments.

The high-risk zone covers all altitudes and flight levels in the Flight Information Regions (FIRs) of Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

However, Indian airlines may operate flights over the airspaces of Oman and Saudi Arabia, subject to certain conditions.

The advisory, issued on March 19, will remain valid until March 28 unless reviewed or superseded by further developments.

Student shot dead inside Varanasi college campus

Two accused, who are students of the same college, on the run

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

An undergraduate student was allegedly shot dead inside the college campus by two students of the same college in Varanasi on Friday.

According to the police sources here, the incident happened around noon at the Uday Pratap College in the town in the presence of hundreds of other students and teachers.

Sources said that the deceased was identified as Surya Pratap Singh, a resident of the neighbouring Ghazipur district and a fourth-semester BSc student.

According to eyewitness accounts, Surya Pratap was standing in a queue to submit his assignment near the social science department when two students of the same college, identified as Manjit Chauhan and Anuj Singh, arrived there and they had a heated exchange over some issue. A little later, Manjit took out a pistol and allegedly opened fire at Surya Pratap.

Surya Pratap, who suffered serious injuries, collapsed on the ground. He was rushed to the hospital, but he succumbed to his injuries a little later. The assailants managed to flee from the spot after perpetrating the crime.

Police officials at Uday Pratap Singh College after a dispute broke out between two students, in Varanasi, on Friday. PTI

Students demand arrest

An irate mob of students later ransacked the furniture and raised slogans against the college administration, demanding the arrest of the accused.

They also forced a closure of the nearby shops.

An old enmity was stated to be the reason behind the killing.

Police said that a hunt was launched to nab the accused students. Security personnel in strength were deployed at the college premises to maintain order.

Delhi Police seal UNI's office

NEW DELHI, PTI

Delhi Police on Friday sealed the office of news agency United News of India (UNI) here, citing a High Court order, even as the media organisation termed the action an "unprecedented atrocity and attack on freedom of the media".

The news agency also alleged that its female staff members were manhandled by the police team.

However, Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Sachin Sharma said that due legal process was followed and no wrongdoing occurred, as everything was videographed.

Police reached the premises on Rafi Marg with adequate deployment to carry out the sealing process after the Delhi High Court dismissed a petition filed by the news agency challenging the cancellation of its land allotment.

The case pertained to an order issued by the Land and Development Office (L&DO) under the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, which had asked the news agency to vacate the premises. The HC upheld the cancellation, rejecting the news agency's plea.

The Statesman, the current owner of UNI, termed the police action an "unprecedented atrocity and attack on freedom of the media in India".

"In an unprecedented atrocity and attack on freedom of the media in India, the Rafi Marg office of the nation's oldest news agency, United News of India (UNI), was literally attacked by a police force that would put an anti-terror operation to shame."

"Employees were not given time to even collect their belongings or hear from management. The management has been left outside, and employees are being beaten inside," it said in a post on X.

UNI said on X: "The sealing of the office of United News of India (UNI), one of the country's oldest and most respected news agencies, has raised serious concerns over press freedom."

Critical road close to China border to open up this year

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A new, short route to Leh, bypassing the treacherous high-altitude Shinkun La, is set to be opened this year, further facilitating troop movements in areas close to the Line of Actual Control, the disputed Sino-Indian boundary.

The Nimmu-Padum-Darcha (NPD) road that starts from Manali in Himachal Pradesh and reaches the Ladakh capital through a route different from the traditional Manali-Leh highway is almost ready, with the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) planning to inaugurate it this year, according to a report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence that the BRO officials briefed.

The House panel tabled the report earlier this week. When asked by the lawmakers about the status of the all-weather tunnel being built under the Shinkun Pass, a top BRO official said, "The Shinkun La tunnel is going well in time, and we are making good progress. As regards the NPD road, we plan to inaugurate it this year."

According to sources, the Nimmu-Padam-Darcha road derives its strategic importance from two critical factors: it is shorter than the other two axes. It crosses only one pass, Shinkun La (16,558 feet), under which the BRO has been constructing a tunnel to make it an all-weather road.

Moreover, the NPD road is shielded from both the India-China and India-Pakistan borders, unlike the other two axes, and can play a critical role in ferrying the logistics.

The BRO may also construct a tunnel under the Khardung La, one of the world's highest motorable roads, with funding support from the Defence Ministry, but a third planned tunnel on the Batalic road will have to wait.

On the progress made in the construction of India-China border roads, BRO officials said 55 roads, out of 62 identified in phase 1, have been completed, while five of 22 phase 2 roads were constructed. Of 60 completed roads, as many as 40 are in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

In recent years, Centre has stepped up efforts to improve border infrastructure in the eastern and western Himalayas. India's highest mountain tunnel under Se La in Arunachal Pradesh was inaugurated in 2024.

Maha women's panel chief quits over astrologer scandal

MUMBAI, DHNS: In a major development following the arrest of celebrity astrologer 'Captain' Ashok Kharat in a case of sexual assault and making objectionable videos of women, Maharashtra State Commission for Women (MSCW) chairperson Rupali Chakankar tendered her resignation on Friday night.

Chakankar, who is also president of the NCP women's wing, had come under fire over her alleged connection with Kharat after videos surfaced showing her with the self-styled godman, in which she was heard praising him.

Earlier in the day, amid mounting attacks from the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, NGOs and activists, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had reportedly asked Chakankar to step down.

Dubbing Kharat 'Bhondu Baba', 'Asaram Bapu' and even 'Jeffrey Epstein', several organisations, including the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti, demanded strict action against the accused.

FAKE AASANA

Guj yoga guru held over fake notes

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

A metropolitan court on Friday remanded a yoga guru and his six followers to ten days of police custody. A day earlier, they had been arrested for manufacturing and circulating counterfeit currency using AI-based tools.

According to the police remand application, the yoga guru and his followers plotted to print fake currency and circulate it "to provide financial assistance to the ashram", Shri Satyam Yoga Foundation.

On Thursday, a team of Ahmedabad Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) arrested yoga guru Pradip Jotangiya and his reported followers — Mukesh L Thummar, Ramesh V Bhalar, Divyesh Rana, Bharatbhai V Kakadiya and Aarti Sevaliya, all residents of Surat.

DCB officials said that the operation was based on specific intelligence, which stated that a white SUV was transporting counterfeit currency from Surat to Ahmedabad. The suspected car was intercepted, and the police team allegedly found a bag containing fake currencies. During the investigation, 44,053 fake currency notes of the denomination of Rs 500, amounting to Rs 2.38 crore, were seized from the the accused.

"Shri Satyam Yog Foundation does not have any permanent source of income, nor does it receive significant financial assistance from donors. In order to financially support the ashram, accused numbers one to six held a meeting about three months ago when they conspired and decided to manufacture counterfeit currency notes of Rs 500 denomination," police said.

neev
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Colombia's Petro under criminal probe in US

REUTERS: Colombian President Gustavo Petro is under criminal investigation by at least two U.S. federal prosecutors' offices, the New York Times reported on Friday, citing sources familiar with the matter.

The inquiries revolve around Petro's possible meetings with drug traffickers and whether his presidential campaign solicited donations from traffickers, the sources told the New York Times.

The investigations are being carried out by the U.S. attorney's offices in Manhattan and Brooklyn, according to the Times, which added that they remained in early stages.

Colombia's presidency did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Nicholas Biase, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's office in Manhattan, declined to comment. A spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's office in Brooklyn did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

White House unveils AI framework

WASHINGTON, PTI: The White House on Friday released a framework for artificial intelligence that seeks to empower parents to manage their children's digital environment and bats for federal leadership, contending that a patchwork of conflicting state laws would undermine innovation.

The legislative blueprint for Congress is split into seven broad categories, ranging from online safety laws for children to the protection of free speech and the streamlining of AI infrastructure.

"The Trump Administration is committed to winning the AI race to usher in a new era of human flourishing, economic competitiveness, and national security for the American people," the White House said in a statement on its website. The framework urges Congress to build on its existing online safety actions for kids, such as the Take It Down Act, which criminalised the online publication of nonconsensual sexually explicit "deepfake" images and videos. The White House said future regulations should give parents and guardians "robust tools" to manage children's online activity.

Iran threatens world tourist sites three weeks into war

Mojtaba Khamenei commends Iranians for delivering bewildering blow to enemies

DUBAI, AP

Israeli security forces disperse Muslim worshippers who had attempted to gather outside the Jerusalem old city walls to perform the early morning prayers for Eid al-Fitr, marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan, on Friday. AFP

Iran threatened to target recreational and tourist sites worldwide and insisted it was still building missiles. Its supreme leader issued another defiant statement on Friday, nearly three weeks into US-Israeli strikes that have killed a slew of Tehran's top leaders and hammered its weapons and energy industries.

The United States was meanwhile deploying three more warships and roughly 2,500 additional Marines to the Middle East, a US official told The Associated Press.

Iran fired on Israel and energy sites in neighbouring Gulf Arab states as many in the region marked one of the holiest days on the Muslim calendar. Iranians were also celebrating the Persian New Year, known as Nowruz, a normally festive holiday that is more subdued this year.

Supreme Leader hails Iran's steadfastness

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei praised Iranians' steadfastness in the face of war in a written statement read on Iranian television to mark the Persian New Year, Nowruz.

Khamenei said the US and Israeli attacks were based on an illusion that killing Iran's top leaders could cause the overthrow of the government. He commended Iranians for "building a nationwide defensive front" and "delivering such a bewildering blow that the enemy fell into contradictions and irrational statements."

Khamenei has not been seen in public since he became supreme leader following the assassination of his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in Israeli strikes at the start of the war.

Iran's top military spokesman, Gen Abolfazl Shekarchi , warned Friday that "parks, recreational areas and tourist destinations" worldwide won't be safe for Tehran's enemies. The threat renewed concerns that Iran may revert to using militant attacks beyond the Middle East as a pressure tactic.

A US official confirmed the further buildup of American forces in the region, saying the USS Boxer and two other amphibious assault ships have deployed along with roughly 2,500 Marines. Two other US officials confirmed that ships were deploying, without saying where they were headed.

IRGC spokesman killed

"We are producing missiles even during war conditions, which is amazing, and there is no particular problem in stockpiling," spokesman Gen. Ali Mohammad Naeini was quoted as saying in Iran's state-run IRAN newspaper.

A short time after the statement was released, Iranian state television said Naeini was killed in an airstrike.

Kuwait refinery attacked

Iran has stepped up its attacks on energy sites in Gulf Arab states after Israel bombed Iran's massive South Pars offshore natural gas field earlier in the week.

Two waves of Iranian drones attacked a Kuwaiti oil refinery early Friday, sparking a fire. The Mina Al-Ahmadi refinery, which can process some 730,000 barrels of oil per day, is one of the largest in the Middle East. It was damaged Thursday in another Iranian attack.

Bahrain said a fire broke out after shrapnel from an intercepted projectile landed on a warehouse, and Saudi Arabia reported shooting down multiple drones targeting its oil-rich Eastern Province.

'Coward Nato'

US President Donald Trump lobbed fresh insults at Nato allies who have spurned his call for help protecting the strait. US allies have refused to join the war, saying they weren't consulted before the US and Israel launched it. Trump called Nato members "COWARDS" in a social media post, saying: "NATO IS A PAPER TIGER."

WAR ESCALATES

- The British government gave authorisation on Friday for the US to use military bases in Britain to carry out strikes on Iranian missile sites that are attacking ships in the Strait of Hormuz.
- The US military is deploying three more warships and roughly 2,500 more marines to the Middle East. The Pentagon's request for another USD 200 billion to fund the war would need congressional approval as the US national debt hits a record USD 39 trillion.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has claimed that Iran no longer has the capability to enrich uranium or produce ballistic missiles

US could 'take out' Iran's Kharg Island any time: WH

▸ The United States could "take out" Iran's Kharg island whenever it wanted, the White House said Friday, after a report that President Donald Trump's administration was considering plans to occupy or blockade the oil hub, reports AFP. Axios reported that Trump was mulling an operation against Kharg to pressure the Islamic republic to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, the crucial shipping lane that Tehran has blocked. The United States is at the same time deploying additional Marines to the Middle East.

Sri Lanka refuses US request to land warplanes

▸ Sri Lanka refused permission for the US to land two of its warplanes in the island's southeast Mattala International Airport in early March, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake told Parliament, reports PTI. Dissanayake said that two US warplanes from Djibouti asked for permission to come to Sri Lanka on March 4 and 8. Both requests were rejected, he said. His statement comes a day after his meeting with US Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor.

WORLD AT GLANCE

'No clandestine activities in Canada linked to Indian govt'

▸ **OTTAWA, PTI:** There are "no longer clandestine activities or transnational repression taking place" in Canada that are linked to the government of India, Canada's police chief has said.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Commissioner Mike Duheme made the comments during an interview with CTV News.

"We're not seeing any connection right now with any foreign entity, based on the criminal information, the investigations that we have presently," he said while responding to a question whether "transnational repression by agents of India" was still a concern.

23 Indians rescued from Nepal

▸ **KATHMANDU, PTI:** Twenty three Indian nationals have been rescued from a brick kiln in Nepal's Madhesh province, police said on Friday.

Human Rights Commission Madhesh Province Office rescued the Indian nationals from Assam from Baba Dharmaraj Brick Kiln in Daknesh-wori Municipality-9, the police said. The commission investigated at the kiln following a complaint registered online regarding forced labour and exploitation, the police quoted Chief of Human Rights Commission Madhesh Province Buddha Narayan Sahani as saying.

Trump administration sues Harvard

▸ **WASHINGTON, AP:** The Justice Department filed a new lawsuit Friday against Harvard University, saying its leadership failed to address antisemitism on campus, creating grounds for the government to freeze existing grants and seek repayment for grants already paid.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Massachusetts, is another missive in a protracted battle between the administration of President Donald Trump and the elite university.

Teenagers sue Musk's xAI over sexual images

▸ **NASHVILLE (US), AP:** Three teenagers in Tennessee sued Elon Musk's xAI this week, claiming the company's image-generation tools were used to morph real photos of them into explicitly sexual images.

The high school students, who are seeking to proceed under pseudonyms, filed the lawsuit in California, where xAI - Musk's artificial intelligence company - has its headquarters. They are seeking class-action status in order to represent what the lawsuit says are thousands of victims like themselves who either are minors or were minors when sexually explicit images of them were created.

Russia ready to assist crisis-hit Cuba

▸ **MOSCOW, AFP:** Russia said Friday it was ready to help its crisis-hit ally Cuba, but declined to comment on whether it had shipped deliveries of much-needed oil to the Caribbean island.

Cuba has been under a US fuel blockade since shortly after Washington deposed Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro, a key ally of Havana, on January 3. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters: "We are in constant contact with the Cuban leadership, with our Cuban friends, and we are indeed discussing possible options for providing assistance."

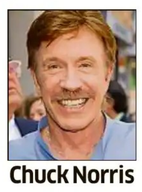
Chuck Norris, action man who inspired endless memes, dies at 86

LOS ANGELES, AFP

Chuck Norris, the US martial artist and Hollywood action star most famous for his role in "Walker, Texas Ranger," has died, his family said Friday. He was 86.

"It is with heavy hearts that our family shares the sudden passing of our beloved Chuck Norris yesterday morning," the family said in a statement on Instagram.

"To the world, he was a martial artist, actor, and a symbol of strength. To us, he was a devoted husband, a loving father and grandfather, an incredible brother, and the heart of our family."



Chuck Norris

US media reported Thursday that Norris had been hospitalized for an undisclosed condition while on the island of Kauai, several days after he celebrated his 86th birthday with a video of him boxing on social media and saying "I don't age. I level up."

In the statement, the family said it would like to keep the details of his passing private, adding "please know that he was surrounded by his family and was at peace."

The martial arts expert turned actor starred in a slew of action films since his acting debut with a cameo in a 1968 Dean Martin film "The Wrecking Crew."

Four years later, his epic fight with the kung-fu superstar Bruce Lee in "The Way of The Dragon" helped turn Norris into an icon on big and small screen alike.

Targeting of commercial ships unacceptable: India

Calls for de-escalation through dialogue and diplomacy

LONDON, PTI

Voicing deep concern over the evolving situation in West Asia, India has called for de-escalation through dialogue while asserting that the navigational rights and freedoms of merchant and commercial vessels must be respected in accordance with international law.

Addressing the 36th Extraordinary Session of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council here Wednesday, Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami also said that targeting commercial ships, endangering civilian crews and impeding safe and free navigation through international waters, including the Strait of Hormuz, are "unacceptable".

The extraordinary two-day session of the IMO Council discussed the impacts on shipping and seafarers of the situation in the Arabian Sea, the Sea of Oman and the Gulf region, particularly in and around the Strait of Hormuz, amid the US-Israel war against Iran.

"India remains deeply concerned about the evolving situation and continues to call for de-escalation through dialogue and diplomacy with utmost restraint and priority being given to the safety of civilians," Doraiswami said.

At present, 24 Indian flag vessels are operating in the Persian Gulf region, including 22 vessels west of the Strait of Hormuz with 611 Indian seafarers on board, and two vessels east of the Strait of Hormuz, with 47 seafarers on board, the High Commissioner said.

Don't Miss
Tomorrow's DH on Sunday
DH DECCAN HERALD

BIG PICTURE — A love mediated by AI?
BOOKS — A Shakespearean twist to the tale!
ART & PURSUITS — The Roma gypsies' Indian connect.
TRAVEL — Experiencing Bhutan through its monasteries.
GENDER — A deep dive into legislation about queer communities.
FOOD & DRINK — How will AI redefine spice combos in your kitchen?

Follow Us

Karnataka State
Office of the Executive Engineer, Shimoga Division, Shimoga
No.EE/PWD/Smg/AE-1/IFT-65/2025-26 Dtd: 20-03-2026
Short Term Tender Notification : 2 Cover system - 2nd Call

Tender invited through E-Procurement version-2 kppp.karnataka. gov.in for the below Indents by Eligible Consultants For needful information please contact Office P.No. 08182 274942 and Helpdesk Ph Nos. 080-25501216/ 080-25501227)

Tender documents down loading & submission dates:20-03-2026 to30-03-2026 3054-03-337-0-05-200 SH Maintenance

1. Shivamogga Division 1 Work (I.No: 32130/Call-2) 3054-04-337-1-10-200 MDR Maintenance

2. Shivamogga Division 1 Work (I.No: 31804/Call-2)

Tender documents down loading & submission dates:

Sl.No: 01-Periods to complete the work is up to: 09 Months (Including Mansoon) . If there any changes in published tenders it will be publishing in E-Procurement version-2 kppp.karnataka.gov.in Website only

Sd/-EE, PW Dept Division, Shimoga

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/125/03/2056

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Assistant Director, BCCC, 4th Floor, Annex-3, Narasimharaja Square, Bengaluru - 560002.

No: AD(AH)/(BCCC)/PR-139/2025-26 **Date: 20-03-2026**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Bangalore Central City Corporation invites tender from eligible bidders for Collection of entrance fees and Slaughter fees for Small Animals at City meat production and processing centre. Usmankhan Road.

Following is the Events of Tender process:

RFP Reference No.: **BCCC/2025-26/SE0126.**

(1) Date of Commencement of Download of Tender Document from Karnataka Public Procurement website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** On **20-03-2026 onwards. (2)** Tender Inviting Authority: **Chief Veterinary Officer. (Animal Husbandry) BCCC. (3)** Tender Accepting Authority: **Commissioner, BCCC. (4)** Last Date and Time for uploading Online Queries in Karnataka Public Procurement portal: **25-03-2026 upto 5.00 PM. (5)** Date and Time of Pre-bid Meeting **25-03-2026 at 12.30 PM** at **OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR. (ANIMAL HUSBANDRY). BCCC, ANNEX-3, 4th Floor. N. R. SQUARE. BANGALORE-560002. (6)** Last Date and Time for uploading of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement portal: **04-04-2026 upto 5.00 PM. (7)** Date and Time of Online Opening of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement portal: **06-04-2026 at 11.00 AM. (8)** Place of opening of RFP: **Online Website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in (9)** Address for Communication: **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR. (ANIMAL HUSBANDRY), BCCC. ANNEX-3, 4th Floor, N. R. SQUARE, BANGALORE-560002. Ph No: 9900229973.** Email: **adahbccc@gmail.com.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Assistant Director. (Animal Husbandry), BCCC.

Government of Karnataka
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PANCHAYAT RAJ
Engineering project Division KALABURAGI

No : EE/RDPRE/PD/KLB/KKRDB /TS/TND/2025-26/1011 **Date : 18-03-2026**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-procurement Two Cover System)

1.	Name of work & Amount put to tender	1) KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT321/call-2 APT-Rs.73,58,758.09 2) KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT324/call-2 APTt-Rs. 79,90,275.51
2.	Head of account	2025-26 year 5054
3.	Class of Contractor	Class-III & above
4.	Issue of Blank Tender Documents	18-03-2026 to 27-03.2026 upto 04.00 pm
5.	Tender Form Fee	As per KPPP Norms
6.	E.M.D. Fee	As Mentioned in KPPP Portal
7.	Receipt of completed tender documents	18-03-2026 to 27-03-2026 upto 04.00 pm
8.	Technical Bid Opening Date	30-03-2026 After 04.01 pm
9.	Financial Bid opening Date	01-04-2026 After 11.00 am
10.	For more details contact	Office of the Executive Engineer, R.D.P.R.E. Project Division Rajapur Road Kalaburagi
11.	Website Address	www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Udaykumar Houde
Executive Engineer
R.D. P.R.E. Project Division
Kalaburagi

IN THE COURT OF XCI ADDL, CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, AND SPECIAL COURT OF KPIDFE ACT 2004, AT BENGALURU (CCH-92)

MISC. No. 992 of 2025

BETWEEN: The Competent Authority, For M/s Speak and Group Company Represented by S.N. Subramanya, Aged about 59 years, Assistant Commissioner-1, O/o. Special Officer & Competent Authority. (IMA & Other KPID cases) 3rd Floor, Podium Block, Vishveshwaraiah Tower, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001.

.....PETITIONER

AND

M/s. Speak and Group Company Represented by its partners, Vishwanatha Nayak, S/o Late Krishna Nayak, Workig Partner, No. 5-161/3, Garadi Road, Yenagudde Kote, Katapadi, Udupi-574105 and others

...RESPONDENT'S

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT No. 2

2. Smt. Mookambika W/o. Late Dhanush M.K. R/at. Sueeur shade, Katla Iddya Village, Surathkal Post, Mangalore-575014

Whereas, the petitioner has filed the above petition under section 5(2) of the KPIDFE Act 2004 and against the Respondent.

The Respondent No. 2 is hereby issued show cause notice U/s 12(1) of KPIDFE Act 2004 and notice on IA No. 1 under section 5 of the Limitation Act., to appear in court of the XCI Addl. City Civil and Sessions Judge (CCH-92) at Bengaluru, in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to above petition on **09.04.2026 at 11.00 A.M.,** in the forenoon.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the date above mentioned petition will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this **13th day March 2026.**

By order of the Court,
Senior Sheristedar, City Civil Court, Bengaluru
Sri Satish V., Special Public Prosecutor.

DIPR/CP/6376/Zen/2025-26

R placen 596 s

Management Co dominant ca

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) said on Friday that 596 students from the 2024-26 class of its Post Graduate Programme (PGP) and PGP in Business Analytics (PGP-BA) received "a record-breaking" 664 offers from 177 firms.

Management Consulting emerged as the dominant career pathway, accounting for 45% of total offers, followed by Technology/Product Management (15%) and Investment

Married woman stabbed to death by stalker

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 34-year-old married woman was brutally stabbed by her stalker for allegedly refusing his advances and left to die in public in West Bengaluru, police officials said on Friday. She later succumbed at the hospital.

The deceased has been identified as Firdos Banu, a house help from Gangondanahalli. Police have arrested Hafiz, 34, an unmarried mechanic from Gangondanahalli, on charges of murder.

According to the police, on Thursday afternoon, Banu, who was returning home from work, was waylaid by the suspect, Hafiz, behind a school on 1st Cross, 1st Main, Gangondanahalli.

Her family members, who were alerted, reached the spot to find Firdos mortally wounded and profusely bleeding. Locals told them that she was stabbed by Hafiz, the police said.

Firdos was taken to a hospital, where she succumbed in the evening, the FIR noted. The Chandra Layout police registered a case under BNS Section 103 (murder) and launched an investigation.

According to the FIR, the woman married Altaf Pasha 15 years ago. Pasha, who was a resident of Gangondanahalli, worked as an autorickshaw driver. Firdos is survived by her husband and three minor sons. Hafiz allegedly used to stalk Firdos regularly when she went to work and returned. The FIR noted that Hafiz used to ask her to "love him and cooperate with him".

Despite multiple refusals, Hafiz continued to stalk Firdos, eventually stabbing her to death, the police said.

Drin weekl

BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government has mandated weekly reviews and the establishment of round-the-clock control rooms to address drinking water shortage in rural areas, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge said on Friday.

Priyank Kharge

"The government has issued clear directions to ensure that drinking water shortages in rural areas are addressed promptly. District administrations must closely monitor the situation and take necessary action without delay," Priyank said in a statement.

All Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) have been directed to hold

Shock resignation of HDFC Bank chief baffles global investors

Lender's stock plunge wipes out over $7 billion in market value

BLOOMBERG

Hours after the startling resignation of HDFC Bank's chairman, executives at India's largest private lender hastily arranged a call to assure investors that all was well. Though the stock had tumbled the most in almost two years, management insisted there was nothing material in Atanu Chakraborty's abrupt departure over "ethics."

Investors weren't buying it. Less than half an hour into the call, without any clear explanations, Prashant Periwal of BlackRock Asset Management said: "So far, whatever I heard on this call doesn't make me any wiser than I was an hour ago."

"Look, if it is too early and you guys have no idea why it was happening, how can you say there's nothing behind it?" he added.

So it went for HDFC Bank, which spent Thursday trying to explain why Chakraborty, a former senior bureaucrat in PM Narendra Modi's government, left after almost five years as part-time chairman of the lender.

His resignation letter was a stunner. "Certain happenings and practices within the bank, that I have observed over last two years, are not in congruence with my personal values and ethics," he wrote.

Chakraborty, 65, tried to walk back his comments a few hours later, telling a local TV channel that his resignation was "routine", and not indicative of any wrongdoing at the bank.

Yet the damage was done. HDFC Bank's shares tumbled more than 5% on Thursday, the biggest single-day drop since June 2024, when markets slumped following national elections. The plunge wiped out more than $7 billion in market value and weighed on India's key banking sector index.

The decline continued during

early trading on Friday. HDFC Bank's stock fell as much as 2.3%, defying a recovery in the bank index.

Analysts and fund managers listened in disbelief as board members struggled to explain what had happened. There were no specific operational or other issues that needed to be highlighted, they said. The Board's oversight mechanism was as robust as ever. Moreover, the banking regulator had promptly approved the appointment of a new chairman for three months to stabilise the ship.

That wasn't flying with investors and analysts at BlackRock, Principal Asset Management and other firms. FIIs hold about 48% of HDFC Bank shares — and they wanted answers.

"What exactly was it?" asked Periwal at BlackRock, which owns more than 3% of HDFC Bank, according to Bloomberg-compiled data. "Because he was the chairman of the bank. He was not like any other employee that resigns saying something and it means nothing."

It's unusual for a bank chairman to resign in such a manner, he pointed out, asking management to describe the sequence of events following Chakraborty's communication to the board.

"What caused that letter to be sent yesterday is something which, really to my mind, defies logic," said Keki Mistry, a bank director who was appointed interim chairman on Thursday with the blessing of India's banking regulator.

At one point, Periwal pressed for details — what exactly happened after Chakraborty tendered his resignation. Two board members said Chakraborty had offered no specifics.

"All of us had asked him what are the reasons behind this and he said, 'I personally have no issues. It could be my value systems, etc., which are different'," said director Harsh Bhanwala. "But he didn't say anything on regulatory aspects of the bank. It was all sound. He agreed with us."

Other analysts expressed disbelief over the Board's lack of specifics. Principal Asset Management equity research analyst Siva Natarajan said that Chakraborty had used "very, very strong words."

In a rare move, meanwhile, RBI defended HDFC Bank, describing it as a systemically important lender "with sound financials, professionally-run Board and competent management team."

Rupee dips to 93.73 against $; worst single-day drop in 4 years

Rise in crude prices amid West Asia tensions dents currency

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Indian rupee slumped to a new record low of 93.73 against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by persistent foreign fund outflows and a steep rise in crude oil prices amid an escalating West Asia conflict.

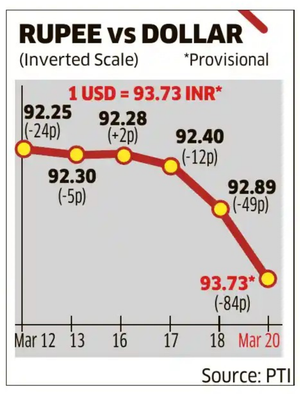
Eclipsing its previous record low of 92.63 touched on Wednesday, the rupee started the Friday trading at the interbank foreign exchange, at 92.92, and soon slipped below the 93-mark. The local currency depreciated further, slipping to a record low of 93.7350 against the greenback.

With over 1% depreciation, the rupee recorded its worst single-day drop in four years. Analysts said the Indian currency may depreciate further as continued disruption in the global supply chain due to the West Asia conflict is likely to widen the country's import bills.

"Markets aggressively priced in the negative impact of elevated crude prices. Sustained strength in crude is expected to significantly widen India's import bill, putting continued pressure on the domestic currency," said Jateen Trivedi, Vice-President at LKP Securities.

"The macro environment remains unfavourable for the rupee, with higher energy costs and persistent dollar demand weighing on sentiment. Unless crude prices ease meaningfully, the rupee is likely to stay under pressure," he said.

Trivedi added that in the near-term, the rupee is expected to trade in a weaker range of 93.00-94.25 against the US dollar.



The rupee has depreciated nearly 8% against the dollar in the past one year. It has declined by over 3% so far in 2026. The Indian currency has also weakened sharply against the other major global currencies like euro, the British pound, and the Chinese yuan.

Heavy outflow of money from the Indian equity markets has hit the rupee. Foreign Institutional Investors pulled out $1.45 billion from the Indian markets on Friday, taking the total outflows in the 2026 calendar year so far to $10.3 billion. In FY2025-26 so far, total FII outflows stand at $14.3 billion.

The Indian currency continues to weaken despite frequent interventions by the RBI. India's foreign exchange (forex) reserves declined by nearly $18 billion in the first two weeks of March, due to likely selling of dollars by the RBI to support the local currency.

The forex reserves declined by $7.05 billion to $709.76 billion for the week ending March 13, as per the latest RBI data. In the previous week, it had fallen by $11.68 billion.

Bourses recover; Sensex up 326 pts

MUMBAI, PTI: Benchmark Sensex and Nifty gave up most of their intra-day gains to end nearly half-a-per cent higher on Friday, following intense buying in PSU bank, IT and metal stocks amid concerns over a further spike in fuel-driven inflation.

In another volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 325.72 points or 0.44% to settle at 74,532.96. During the day, it jumped 1,079.15 points, or 1.45%, to 75,286.39. The 50-share NSE Nifty edged higher by 112.35 points, or 0.49%, to end at 23,114.50. Intra-day, it jumped 343 points, or 1.49%, to 23,345.15.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Tata Steel, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Trent, RIL, Titan, NTPC and Sun Pharma were among the major gainers. HDFC Bank, BEL, Kotak Mahindra Bank and ICICI Bank were among the laggards.

The BSE MidCap Select index climbed 0.97%, while SmallCap Select index declined 0.32%. Among sectoral indices, BSE PSU Bank jumped 2.19%, Focused IT (2.18%), IT (2.08%), healthcare (1.45%), metal (1.41%) and energy (1.03%).

Kaizad Bharucha to get more responsibilities: HDFC Bank MD

Board to meet soon to take a call on seeking explanation from ex-chairman

BENGALURU, DHNS

Kaizad Bharucha, Deputy Managing Director at HDFC Bank, will get more responsibilities as the bank looks at organisational restructuring in the coming days, said Sashidhar Jagdishan, MD and CEO, HDFC Bank.

Addressing an analysts call, on Thursday, he said, "He (Bharucha) will only get more responsibilities as we move forward. And the very fact that we were all unanimous both at the Board level to send his name for yet another term as a Deputy Managing Director reflects that and we are extremely happy that the approvals have come and he's going to be there for the next three years, which is going to be one of our best years in the history of the bank."

Stating that Kaizad is a very dear colleague, he said, "I have the highest regards and respect for him. We have worked together. Unfortunately, I do not know what kind of stories are going around. But today that man handles the entire business, the asset business of the balance sheet which reflects the kind of respect and stature that he commands within the organisation, both at the Board level and at the at the management level as well. So that will continue."

Sashidhar Jagdishan

Keki Mistry

No major issues

HDFC Bank's interim part-time chairman Keki Mistry reassured the investors that there are "no major issues" at the bank and indicated that the development was not linked to any governance or operational issues.

"The bank has a very strong risk management process. It has a very strong audit process, and is a systemically-important bank and therefore gets supervised continuously by RBI on a regular basis. We, the Board, carry out various kinds of audits of different functions and there has never been anything from a governance standpoint to my mind, which has come to the attention of the Board," Mistry told in the investors call.

Responding to an analyst's query, regarding asking RBI to investigate the allegations made by the former chairman, Atanu Chakraborty, Mistry said the Board will meet soon, and take a call on what to do. "Many of the Board members went and met RBI, the regulator, and RBI is fully in the picture, fully in the loop and the fact that they are comfortable with what is going on in the bank is reflected in the fact that within a short period of time, they approved my appointment for three months just to stabilise things," he said.

He also expressed confidence that the bank will come out very clean. "We have really truly the highest standards of governance and as I said, I believe very strongly in governance personally, I would never remain on the Board if I had the slightest doubt about governance," he added.

Mistry, further added that the bank has the strongest form of governance that is possible in a financial institution, and is very strong on ethics. "As far as our seeking some explanation from Chakraborty, the Board will of course meet very, very soon and take a call on how to take it forward," he said.

IT stocks rally up after Accenture reports strong earnings

BENGALURU, DHNS

Indian IT stocks on Friday surged nearly 2% after Accenture posted strong revenues and raised its growth guidance. Infosys shares were up 2.78% on Friday and closed at Rs 1,254.60 on the BSE. Wipro and HCLTech shares were up 1.33% and 1.73%, respectively. The country's largest IT services firm, Tata Consultancy Services, also saw its shares surge and close at Rs 2,390.60, up 1.44% on the BSE.

For the quarter ended February 2026, Accenture posted revenues of $18 billion, an increase of 8% in US dollars, and its operating margin stood at 13.8%, an expansion of 30 basis points. The company's net income for the quarter stood at $1.86 billion, compared with $1.82 billion for the second quarter of fiscal 2025.

For fiscal 2026, the company now expects full-year revenue growth to be 3-5% in local currency. The company has also raised its full-year free cash flow expectation to be in the range of $10.8 billion to $11.5 billion.

According to analysts, Indian IT firms might also witness a similar growth outlook, and AI will lead to steady growth in the coming quarters.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said the IT sector found support from deep long-term value and the absence of any visible negative impact from AI. "While the consensus remains cautiously optimistic, expectations are that conflict-related risks may ease over the next couple of weeks, allowing market volatility to subside. Buying opportunities are emerging after the massive sell-off this month, though the loss of Qatar's gas capacity is expected to have an impact on the Indian LNG sector," he added.

In the February quarter, Accenture's new bookings were $22.11 billion, an increase of 6% in US dollars. While its consulting new bookings were at $11.33 billion, Managed Services' new bookings were at $10.78 billion.

Accenture Chair and CEO Julie Sweet said they delivered record second-quarter bookings of $22.1 billion, including a record 41 clients with quarterly bookings greater than $100 million, with revenues at the top of the guided range, while continuing to take a significant share in a competitive market.

"We're accelerating our critical work with clients to scale advanced AI across their enterprise, and we're seeing strong AI-driven growth. Our new strategic acquisitions will further strengthen our capabilities and expand our scale to help clients create value and achieve AI-based transformation. With our deep client relationships, industry and process expertise, leading and emerging ecosystem partnerships, and unmatched execution strength, we are uniquely positioned to help clients reinvent and capture the significant opportunities ahead," she said.

Wipro Limited Executive Chairman Rishad Premji (right), with Gujarat Deputy CM Harsh Sanghavi (left) and former CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank Uday Kotak (centre), and others, during the inauguration of Wipro's new office at GIFT City, in Gandhinagar, on Thursday. PTI

Wipro launches GIFT City Hub, AI DC-solution

BENGALURU, DHNS: IT services firm Wipro has launched a new hub at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), Gandhinagar. The firm said this expansion into GIFT City creates a strong foundation to accelerate the development of next-generation, consulting-led and AI-first financial services capabilities.

Aligned with Wipro Intelligence — the unified suite of AI-powered platforms, solutions, and transformative offerings — the new hub will support the delivery of advanced solutions across areas such as digital banking and capital markets, along with regulatory technology, risk and compliance, and core platform modernisation initiatives.

"Wipro's presence at GIFT City is a strategic investment to scale the impact of Wipro Intelligence for the global BFSI industry. By combining our consulting-led, AI-powered transformation and delivery capabilities with deep domain expertise and a strong innovation culture within a high-quality talent ecosystem, we are enabling deeper client engagement and long-term value creation," Sanjeev Jain, Chief Operating Officer, Wipro Limited, said.

The hub will offer 150 ready-to-deploy seats, with the flexibility to scale up to 500 seats based on client demand. Wipro on Friday also announced the launch of its Wipro AI-Data Centre (DC) solution, a standardised and secure stack designed to accelerate enterprise-scale AI adoption, while modernising core data centre environments and transforming customer experience operations.

"Customer experience transformation requires AI solutions that are scalable, secure, and infrastructure-ready," said Satish Yadavalli, Global Business Head – Cloud, Infrastructure and Security Services, Wipro Limited.

"With the launch of our NVIDIA-powered AI-DC solution, we will be able to support organisations in modernising their data centres, while preparing for AI-native workloads and helping them securely deploy and manage AI solutions across business functions. At the core of the AI-DC solution is Wipro Intelligence integrated with NVIDIA AI Enterprise, which will further enable us to orchestrate, govern, and scale NVIDIA-powered AI across real-world environments," he added.

CBDT notifies new I-T law to be effective from April 1

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on Friday notified the rules for the Income Tax Act, 2025, which will come into effect from April 1.

The new Act, which was cleared by Parliament in August 2025, seeks to replace the six-decade-old Income Tax Act, 1961, with a simplified framework. It removes redundant provisions and archaic language and reduces the number of sections from 819 under the 1961 Act, to 536, while the number of chapters has been cut from 47 to 23.

It also brings several changes that will impact tax burden and compliance. The new law provides enhanced tax benefit for House Rent Allowance (HRA) to salary-earners, but makes disclosure of landlord-tenant relationship mandatory.

Under the new framework, eight cities—Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Pune, Ahmedabad and Bengaluru—will qualify for a higher exemption limit of 50% of salary, while all other locations will continue to have an exemption ceiling of 40%. Now electric vehicles will also be considered for perquisites taxation and fall within the concessional valuation slab for employer-provided motorcars.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the new Act must be grounded in a moral and ethical framework. "Income Tax Act, 2025, must be rooted in moral and ethical systems, and replace complexity with clarity, ensuring accountable governance through transparent, rule-based oversight," she said at an event.

Core sector growth slows down to 3-month low of 2.3% in Feb

NEW DELHI, PTI: Production growth in eight core infrastructure sectors slowed to a three-month low of 2.3% in February due to contraction in the output of crude oil, natural gas, and refinery products. According to government data, these eight sectors expanded by 3.4% in the same month last year.

The growth rate in production of fertiliser, cement and electricity declined to 3.4%, 9.3% and 0.5%, respectively, in February this year.

However, coal and steel production recorded healthy growth.

During April-February, the cumulative production growth in the infrastructure sector was 2.9%, compared to 4.4% in the same period of the last financial year.

Commenting on the data, Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist at Icra Ltd, said that even before the start of the West Asia crisis, the growth of the core sector output in India had slowed to a three-month low.

Accordingly, IIP growth appears set to moderate to around 4% in February 2026 from 4.8% in January 2026, she said.

"The longer that the crisis persists, resulting in higher fuel prices and tighter availability, the larger the downside will be for India's GDP growth in FY2027, notwithstanding the buffers provided by resilient domestic demand," she added.

Lexus launches ES500e in India

NEW DELHI, PTI: Luxury carmaker Lexus India on Friday introduced its first battery electric vehicle ES500e with plans to expand the product range further based on customer demand.

The ES500e, which comes with a driving range of around 580 km on a single charge, is priced at Rs 89.99 lakh (ex-showroom).

In an interaction with PTI, Lexus India President Hikaru Ikeuchi stated that the company may bring in more models from the global line-up after gauging the customer interest in the country.

Zomato hikes platform fee to Rs 14.90 per order

BENGALURU, DHNS: Zomato on Friday hiked platform fee charges to Rs 14.90 per order, a 19% jump, from Rs 12.50, which it charged earlier.

Rival Swiggy has been charging about Rs 14.99 platform fee from users. Zomato last hiked its platform fee in September 2025 to Rs 12, from Rs 10, and again revised it to Rs 12.50.

The move is to strengthen the platform's financial performance, and also comes at a time when crude prices are increasing amid the West Asia conflict. Food delivery majors might also begin increasing delivery charges, considering the increase in crude prices.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Zomato parent Eternal, said it received demand order notice with respect to short payment of tax with interest and penalty thereon. "For the period April 2019 to March 2020 issued by Additional Commissioner, CGST Gurugram Commissionerate, Gurugram, confirming GST of Rs 4,97,99,769 with interest as applicable; and for the period April 2022 to March 2023 issued by Assistant Commissioner, Ranchi, confirming GST of Rs 5,99,95,835 with interest of Rs 2,69,98,126 and penalty of INR 59,99,583," it said in a filing.

Flipkart Group CFO Sriram Venkataraman steps down

BENGALURU, DHNS: E-commerce major Flipkart on Friday announced that Sriram Venkataraman will be moving on from his role as Group Chief Financial Officer. The Walmart-backed company announced the appointment of Nishant Verman to the leadership team as Senior Vice-President, Corporate Development and Partnerships.

Venkataraman will remain with the company for a period of time to ensure continuity and a smooth transition. During this period, Ravi Iyer, CFO, Flipkart, will oversee the broader finance organisation, the company said.

"Sriram has been a valued member of the leadership team and has played an important role in strengthening our finance organisation over the years. We thank him for his contributions and wish him the very best for the future," Flipkart Group CEO Kalyan Krishnamurthy said.

Nishant rejoins Flipkart following his successful entrepreneurial venture, Bzaar, where he scaled a cross-border exports platform to profitability, disrupting how US retailers source from India.

Meanwhile, the e-commerce major has announced a 105% bonus payout to employees for 2025 on the back of strong growth momentum. As per an internal communication, seen by *DH*, the bonus payout for eligible employees at the Senior Director (SD) level and below will be made in March.

For VPs and SVPs, the payout will be post-closure of the 2025 performance process.

Gussy's big wish

Shyamala Mani Iyer writes how a caterpillar learns about beauty and kindness

Gussy the caterpillar was sad. Everyone called him creepy and ugly. He looked around him. The butterflies flitting about were so colourful. The birds chirping on the trees were beautiful in their own way. Even the snail crawling slowly on the ground had a sheen on its body!

"Why are you so sad?" asked a voice. He looked down and found Lily the ladybird sitting beside him.

"I want to be beautiful so people like me. Everyone thinks I am creepy and avoids me."

"Oh!" said Lily. Then she said, "Why don't you ask the Wise Old Owl? He might be able to help you."

"Who is the Wise Old Owl? And where can I find him?" asked Gussy.

"He is an old owl who lives on a huge banyan tree in the Dark Forest. I have heard my parents speak about him," said Lily.

"The Dark Forest?" said Gussy, horrified. He had heard terrible tales about the forest and the creatures who lived there. "Where is it?" he asked in a trembling voice.

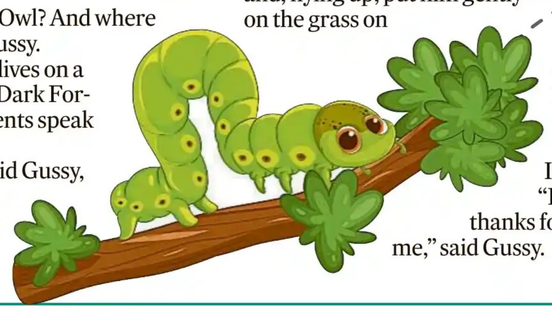
"You have to cross the Grove of Peacocks and the Lake of Shimmering Fish to reach there."

Gussy had heard of the Grove of Peacocks and the Lake of Shimmering Fish also. It was a long way off. But he was determined to be beautiful and so decided to set off immediately.

He said goodbye to the little ladybird and set off. He travelled most of the morning and reached the Grove of Peacocks. He peeped timidly through the grass and saw the peacocks dancing. He tried to move in between their dancing legs to the other side. Just then, one of the peacocks saw him and called, "Look! An ugly caterpillar!" and tried to trample him. The other peacocks laughed as he struggled to escape their legs.

Just then someone picked him up and, flying up, put him gently on the grass on the other side of the grove. He looked to see who his saviour was. It was a bee.

"Hello, thanks for saving me," said Gussy.



"That's okay. I don't like the peacocks either. They are perpetually trying to catch me as I sit on the flowers."

Gussy continued on his journey and reached the Lake of Shimmering Fish. Looking at the water, he realised why it was called so. The lake was full of shimmering fish in lovely colours of gold, red, blue and purple. There was a small causeway across the lake, and Gussy crawled onto it.

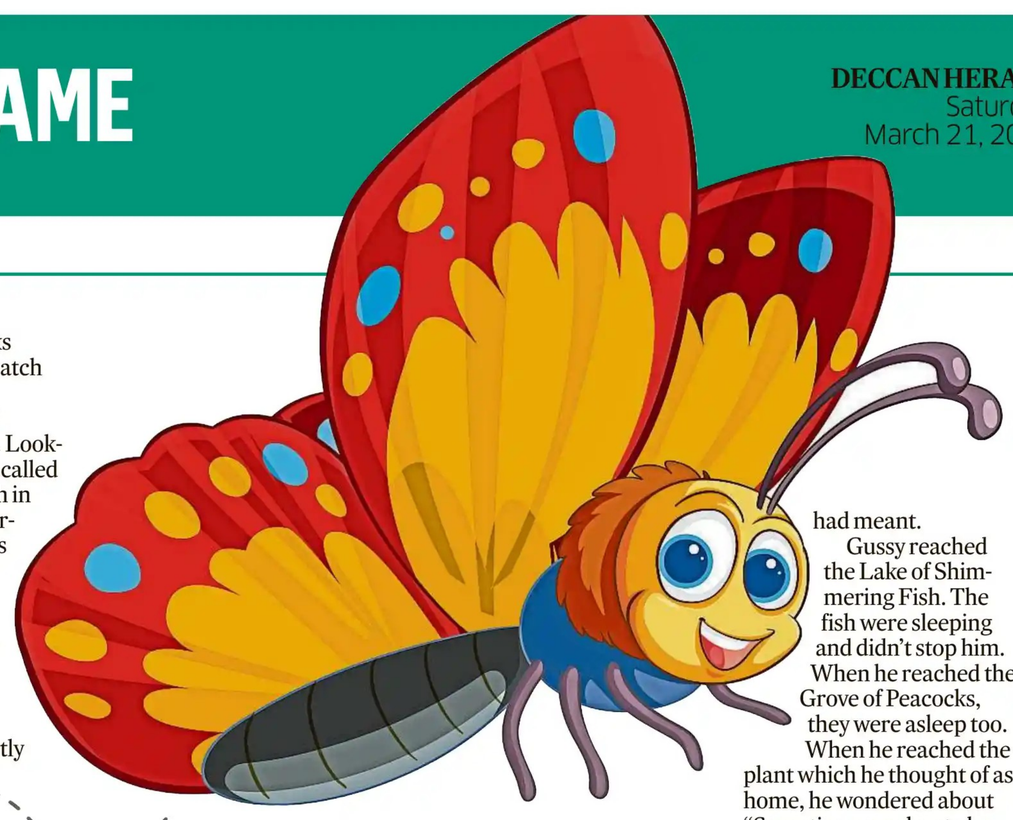
The fish gathered around him immediately. They started teasing him, pushing him hither and thither. Gussy tried to wriggle his way across, but it was of no use. He was afraid he would fall into the water and drown.

Just then, someone pushed him gently onto a leaf and deftly rowed him across the lake. He dared to breathe only after he had reached the other side. When he looked to see who his saviour was, he found it was an ant.

"Thanks!" he said.

It was almost sunset when he reached the banyan tree where the Wise Old Owl stayed. The Wise Old Owl stayed in a big hole right on top of the tree. He reached the hole where the Owl stayed and called to him, "Wise Old Owl, I have come to see you."

"What do you want?" asked the Owl.



"Everyone calls me ugly. I want to be beautiful," said Gussy.

"It's not important to be beautiful. It's more important to be kind," said the Owl. "Also, sometimes one has to be patient to be beautiful."

"Thanks," said Gussy, as the Owl went into his hole and shut the door. As he crawled down the tree, he wondered about what the Owl had said.

"It's more important to be kind", the Owl had said. He didn't understand at first. Then he remembered the honeybee and the ant who had helped him. They weren't particularly beautiful, but they had been kind. And the peacocks and fish had been beautiful but not at all kind. Perhaps that's what the Owl had meant.

Gussy reached the Lake of Shimmering Fish. The fish were sleeping and didn't stop him. When he reached the Grove of Peacocks, they were asleep too. When he reached the plant which he thought of as home, he wondered about "Sometimes one has to be patient to be beautiful." He didn't understand that one. Suddenly he felt hungry. He ate and ate and then fell asleep.

When he woke up, he didn't recognise himself! He had turned into a gorgeous butterfly with red and gold wings. The children around cried, "What a beautiful butterfly!"

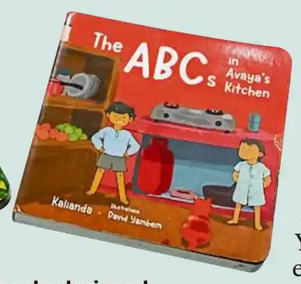
Gussy was happy. He remembered what the Owl had said about being patient to be beautiful. He also remembered the importance of being kind. So, as he flitted from flower to flower, picking the nectar from each flower, he also gathered some pollen, which he deposited into another flower. That way the flowers grew and the garden flourished.

Gussy was finally happy. He was not only beautiful but also kind!

Letters and numbers meet life in Kodagu

US-based UX designer creates early-learning books rooted in a picturesque part of Karnataka

UX designer Tej Kalianda's children were the first reason she began thinking about early-learning books differently.



The children's books designed by Tej Kalianda (below) feature everyday sights from Kodagu. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Based in San Francisco, USA, and originally from Kodagu, Tej created the board books 'The ABCs in Avaya's Kitchen' and '123 Coorg Critters' for children aged 0 to 3. They teach alphabets and numbers "through the everyday sights, sounds and rhythms of Kodava life" rather than by focusing on festivals or folklore. "It captures everything from meals and homes to farms, coffee estates, rain and wildlife," she says.

After observing what held her children's attention the longest, Tej realised strong visual identity, rich colours and read-aloud-friendly text kept young readers coming back to the book.

She also noticed a growing global trend of alphabet books rooted in place. "I came across books about Hawaiian animals and life in Nigeria. That made me think, why not create something that reflects life in Kodagu, especially for my own children?" says the 39-year-old mother of two.

The alphabet book came first, shaped by words her children heard at home but rarely saw represented in mainstream books, such as 'avaya', 'bembale', 'elle unde', among others. Tej wanted her kids to recognise everyday Kodava vocabulary without translating it into something it isn't. "Take kadambut, for example. You can explain it as a rice ball in English, but that's not the word we use at home. Kadambut is kadambut," she says.

While working on the alphabet book, she also had ideas that didn't fit the format. That led to the creation of the number book, which captures Kodagu's landscape and wildlife through counting.

"Most mainstream children's books talk about animals like pandas, polar bears, or koalas... But when they visit Kodagu, they see deer, elephants, and even leeches," she says, adding that learning becomes more alive when it mirrors real life experience.

Tej says her aim wasn't to make something "purely Indian". "The books aren't trying to teach culture explicitly. Instead, they aim to make learning feel familiar," she says.

The idea took shape in early 2025, and despite a demanding job and parenting responsibilities, Tej time-boxed the process. "I set aside 30 minutes a day, Monday to Friday," she says. Over about 60 days, she shaped the concept and visual language, working with illustrators David Yambem and Verove Pinto. The books were released in September 2025.

For details, visit peppervinepress.com or write to connect@brandworx.digital

Should schools teach life skills?

Open Sesame readers talk it out

YES

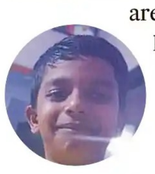
I believe schools should teach life skills like cooking and budgeting. These skills are very important for our daily lives. Education should not only focus on books and exams but also help students learn how to live independently.

Cooking is a useful skill for everyone. If students learn cooking in school, they can prepare healthy food for themselves and their families. It also helps them understand nutrition and develop healthy eating habits.

Budgeting is another important skill. When students learn how to manage money, they can plan their expenses wisely. They will learn how to save money and avoid wasting it. This knowledge will help them in the future when they start working and managing their own finances.

Life skills also make students more confident and responsible. They learn problem-solving, planning, and decision-making. These skills are necessary for a successful and balanced life.

Therefore, schools should include life skills like cooking and budgeting in their curriculum so that students are better prepared for real life.



– **NIKITHAN M, 11**
Hubballi, Karnataka

NO

Schools are meant to shape our minds, not run our kitchens or manage our wallets. The main purpose of schools is to build strong knowledge and thinking skills. Students go to school to learn important subjects such as mathematics, science, languages, and history, which help prepare them for higher studies and future careers.

Although life skills like cooking and budgeting are useful, they do not necessarily need to be taught in schools. These are everyday skills that children can easily learn at home from their parents and family members. Cooking simple meals or learning how to save and spend money wisely can be learned through daily life and practice.

Schools already have busy timetables filled with classes, homework, projects, and examinations. Adding cooking or budgeting lessons may increase pressure on students and reduce the time available for academic learning. Schools should prepare students for exams and careers, while families prepare children for daily life.

Moreover, not every school has the proper facilities or trained teachers to teach these practical skills effectively.

Therefore, while life skills are important, schools should focus on academic education, while homes remain the first and best classroom for everyday life skills.

– **ANIKA, 11**
Bengaluru, Karnataka

LETTER WRITING

Write an open letter to your favourite tree

If you could have a conversation with your favourite tree, what would you like to know about it, and what would you tell it about yourself? Write an open letter and share it with us. You stand a chance of being featured in an upcoming edition. Mail your work to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph. Entries close on March 26.

ART CORNER

Love painting?

Want to showcase your flair for colours? Send your paintings on the theme 'Amazing April' to *Open Sesame* and stand a chance to get featured in an upcoming edition. Mail photographs of your work to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph of yourself. Entries close on April 9.

POETS IN THE MAKING

Want to see your poetry in print?

Send in poems on the topic 'My favourite place' to *Open Sesame*. You may be featured in an upcoming edition. Mail your work — not more than 12 lines — to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*. Entries close on April 2. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph.

Word of the Week

uncanny

(adjective)
— very strange; something that you cannot easily explain.

Usage:
— Roshan has an uncanny ability to remember names and faces.
— Shruthi had an uncanny feeling that she was being followed.

This Week:

Weavers of words

Open Sesame Quiz

Take the fun Open Sesame quiz, and stand a chance to win gift vouchers worth Rs 500. Open to children below 16 years.

Q1 In 1999, UNESCO designated March 21 as World Poetry Day. Some people, however, still celebrate it on its earlier date, October 15: the birthday of an ancient poet. Who was he?

Q2 Which 10th-century epic poem, by the Persian poet Ferdowsi, contains the tragic story of the legendary warrior, Rostam, who inadvertently kills his own son, Sohrab, on the battlefield?

Q3 At President Kennedy's inauguration, 86-year-old Robert Frost could not see clearly enough to read the poem he had composed for the occasion. Which one did he recite instead?

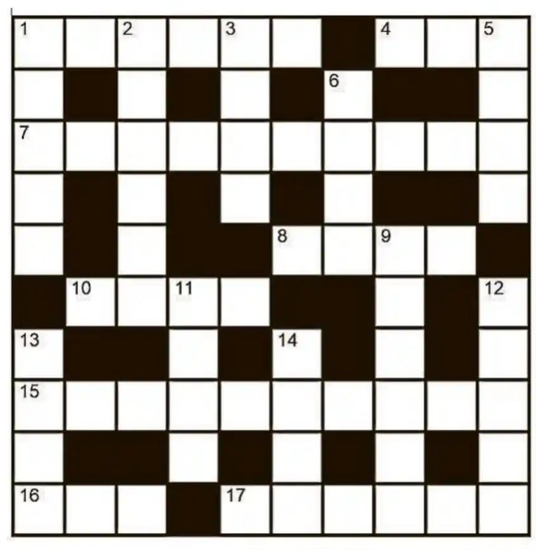
Scan the QR code
Or visit bit.ly/DHopensesame to participate in the quiz.

Q4 **Rhyme Time:** Two clues to which the answers rhyme with each other.
Clue A: Geoffrey Chaucer wrote 'The Canterbury__.'
Clue B: A country that is part of the United Kingdom.

Q5 **Clue Cluster:** In Vikram Seth's 'The Frog and the Nightingale', to which musician is the frog compared? Use these clues.
a) Austria
b) 18th century
c) Composer
d) Requiem

WINNER'S NAMES: Soumya Martis (14), Shivamogga; Hannah Jane J (12), Bengaluru; Atyanksh K (13), Kalaburagi.
ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUIZ: A1) Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, A2) PM Narendra Modi, A3) France/French, A4) Bird/Third, A5) Ananda Devi

CROSSWORD



BY CHITTARANJAN ANDRADE

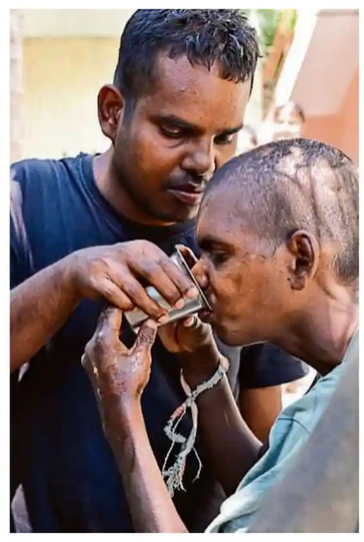
Across

1 Pigmented design on skin (6)
4 Fruit with a hard shell (3)
7 Non-woody plant with yellow fruit (6,4)
8 Stain or blemish (4)
10 Crossword puzzle hint (4)
15 Sweet fruit similar to kokum (10)
16 Unpleasant, sticky substance (3)
17 Utilized fully (4,2)

Down

1 Something forbidden (5)
2 Underground passage (6)
3 Possesses (4)
5 At that time (4)
6 Halt (4)
9 Deeply annoy (6)
11 Strongly encourage (4)
12 Confess (3,2)
13 Smoke and fog (4)
14 Enquires (4)

ANSWERS
Across: 1 Tattoo, 4 Nut, 7 Banana tree, 8 Spot, 10 Clue, 15 Mangosteen, 16 Goo, 17 Used up.
Down: 1 Taboo, 2 Tunnel, 3 Owns, 5 Then, 6 Stop, 9 Offend, 11 Urge, 12 Own up, 13 Smog, 14 Asks.



Stories from a home for the DESTITUTE

On any given day, 800-1,000 homeless people are loitering on Bengaluru's streets. Barkha Kumari visits a shelter offering care and hope to the abandoned and the ill

Pink bougainvillea hangs over the entrance of a large house, with a conifer rising behind it. It is a striking sight against the bright blue sky. There are more trees inside the compound, bearing mangoes, chikoo, and pomegranates. Beneath them, people are passing the afternoon napping, rolling wicks, or simply gazing into the distance.

Some sit in wheelchairs, others rest beside their crutches. A few are wrapped in bandages, while others have amputated limbs. A man is absorbed in his newspaper, reading about the Men's T20 World Cup final, unfazed by the crackling FM music in the background. I see a woman smiling at me. "Zeenat Aman," she says, introducing herself. Soon, we are crooning her favourite song, 'Tujhe dekha toh yeh jaana sanam'.

This place could not be farther from the lives they once led. Many were found on the streets, hungry, dejected, or too lost to ask for help. Others were picked up from homes, railway stations, or hospital campuses, with infected wounds, exposed bones, fractured skulls, or rat bites. Some were brought here by families that could not afford to care for them, or just did not want to.

I am visiting AiR Humanitarian Homes in Chikkagubbi, Bengaluru. The NGO also runs a much larger centre in Bannerghatta. Together, the two facilities are home to about 600 people, fewer than 10% of whom are in touch with their families. Many of the residents live with mental illness, mobility challenges, and age-related problems. Some are survivors of addiction, accidents or domestic abuse. There are unlettered folks as well as former lecturers, a doctor, and a public sector employee. Almost 80% come from BPL families, while a minuscule number have children living overseas.

This shelter also has 12 children between the ages of 10 and 14. "All of them were found in dustbins. They have mental or physical disabilities. Were they dumped because of financial difficulties or because they were born out of wedlock? We will never know. They were no older than a month when we found them," shares Divya, director of the NGO, which started in 1993.

The team shares a consistent observation: no family has ever taken back someone they once abandoned. At first, they visit the shelter every week, then it drops to once a month. Eventually, it is the team that has to chase them just to get them on a video call. Older men are abandoned more than older women, says Meena, a senior executive. Families tend to rely on women for household chores, while men are seen as having little use beyond ferrying grandkids around.

Will you judge?

A visit to a destitute shelter first makes you angry. Why would a well-to-do family leave their blind mother near a temple and drive away? Why would a landlord lock up a family that couldn't pay rent during the pandemic? Why would a son not come from the US for his father's last rites and yet insist on having the ashes couriered? What marriage pressures could have pushed a female IT worker into homelessness? But the team doesn't judge. As Divya says, in many cases, we never fully know the backstory — who wronged whom? Last month, the team found a woman on the streets and traced her husband within 20 days. The reunion was far from joyous. She accused him of beating her, while he claimed she verbally abuses him, making life at home unbearable, especially with their son preparing to become a doctor.

In contrast, some cases make you question whether our justice, medical, and social welfare systems have let people down. The day before my visit, the NGO received an alert about a woman about 20 years old. She had a rod in her leg from a previous operation, and it needed to be removed due to pus formation. The family refused to take her, claiming "she would hang her baby upside down, and had tried to jump to death herself". Could it be out of postpartum depression, the team wonders.

In another case, a family brought a 24-year-old woman home to sign property papers but then abandoned her on the road. Police helped her return to the shelter. She had been admitted by her sister, who explained that her brother-in-law had allegedly kicked her during pregnancy, causing a miscarriage, denied her food, and forced her into isolation. "The husband's family came back for her a second time, claiming her signatures did not match across the documents. We said a firm no," shares Divya. Now, this NGO requires families to obtain permission from the police before taking anyone home.

The team knows the backstories only as much as the residents share. Trauma also affects how they recount their past. An elderly resident sometimes insists she is single, even though records suggests she was married to a non-Indian who cheated on her. There is also reluctance to discuss estrangement, and much hesitation to pursue a legal case.

Streets over schedule

According to Bengaluru's municipal corporation, an average of 800-1,000 homeless people can be found on the city's streets on any given day, mostly in the 40-60 age group. The NGO responds to calls from the police, hospitals, donors, shopkeepers, and through their 24×7 helpline (97395 44444). It checks on more than 140 destitute individuals each week, but only about 10% agree to receive medical care or rehabilitation.

For many, a life of routine, from bathing to wearing fresh clothes, eating on time and taking medicines, is like losing freedom, especially for those addicted to tobacco or alcohol. So when the team approaches destitute persons with a bottle of water or a glass of juice, some run away, others turn aggressive. Some even suspect the staff of being involved in organ or human trafficking. A few are simply bitter with life. A man with a straggly bread once shouted in Kannada, "Only when you saw my wound did you approach me. All this while, I was invisible." Meena recalls a Russian woman in her 70s. She was found bedridden in her villa but refused to come to the shelter, saying her suffering was the result of her karma and that she deserved it. She relented on the third visit, but died within a day of arriving at the centre. She had breast cancer.

Those who try to start a new life find it difficult at first. One woman complained that she was better off eating khushka on the streets than having anna sambar in their canteen. A cancer patient with a beedi smoking habit had to be let go after he started throwing soiled diapers around, tearing mattresses, and urinating at the gate. Many attempt to escape, and this is true of both men and women. Begging is a major draw. The team recalls a habitual absconder they once found on the streets with an unusually large stomach. He was hiding Rs 35,000 in plastic covers under his T-shirt!

People are brought to the shelter only with their consent, and after the case is reported to the jurisdictional police. Documenting their identities presents the first challenge. Sometimes, cops have to assign names for them on the spot as many are not mentally able to think clearly. Someone picked up from Jayanagar might become Jay, while a person found in Govindapura might be called Govinda. Today, the shelter hosts many Manjunaths, Lakshammas, and Gowrammas. Birthdays are rarely celebrated, as many residents don't even know when they were born. But all festivals are celebrated, from Ugadi to Eid to Christmas.

AiR Humanitarian Homes in Chikkagubbi, Bengaluru, houses over 140 homeless and sick people, including 12 children between the ages of 10 and 14. DH PHOTOS/B K JANARDHAN

Ward watch

Personal wardrobes, trunks, and family photographs are noticeably absent in the wards. Residents pick their clothes from a common pool — a way for the team to show that everyone is equal. The men's ward is in impeccable order, with bedsheets stretched to the corners and blankets folded neatly. It is overseen by Ravi, their cook. He cannot speak but enforces a military-like discipline. The women's ward feels more lived-in. One resident, fondly called Chikkamma, keeps a plastic chair next to her bed, stacked with miscellaneous bundles and topped by a giant soft toy. Her family visits her regularly.

The absence of phones is also apparent. Items like phones and jewellery are kept in the office locker, again to enforce equality. Through the day, residents watch TV, play carrom or chess, step out for snacks, and chat in the central courtyard. Some help in the kitchen, tend the garden, or assist one another with bathing and meals.

A faint stench of urine lingers in the air, especially in the children's ward. Divya explains that even though the children wear diapers, they tend to throw them off. Life in such shelters is never fully under control, no matter how hard the staff try. During psychiatric breakdowns, residents may smash windows or pull down fans. And what happens when someone passes away? They say most residents remember little beyond 24 hours.

'Family won't come'

Loneliness haunts many lives here. Manohar* was the all-India secretary of a temple trust when the NGO found him alone in his Bengaluru home, in a diaper, barely conscious, with an overgrown beard and infected legs. Both legs had to be partially amputated. He rarely discusses his family. He has a son in the US and a daughter in Bengaluru. "He says even if you inform them, they won't come," says Praveen, the NGO's chief. Yet influential contacts from Bengaluru to Kerala, including a collector and an MLA, called to check on him and donated a motorised wheelchair.

Rakesh*, an MBBS doctor, was found wandering aimlessly on the Victoria Hospital campus, his foot badly infested with maggots. He had no family, job or money. He told the team he quit his job after he started forgetting the names of medicines or treatments. Though he is better now, he refuses to return to practice; he has lost confidence. But he tries to keep the shelter's 24/7 clinic team updated on residents' needs. Through friends, he discovered that his mother is alive and lives in an old-age home, which he visits often.

Gayathri was found lying on the floor of her home, malnourished and soiled. After the death of her mother and younger brother, she told me she sank into shock. Her elder brother used to visit with food and check on her, but when he didn't turn up for a few days, neighbours alerted the NGO. She came to the shelter in a wheelchair over 17 years ago. Her brother continued visiting until he passed away. Today, she walks around, "helps with chores, listens to bhajans, and is happy".

Feels like home

Daily life at the shelter has a familiar rhythm. Women watch soap operas, while men ignore TV curfews to catch cricket matches. Small things bring them great happiness, whether it is the promise of a pair of earrings or a plate of gobi manchuri. They love singing and dancing. Taking the mic from them is a task, the team says. Strong friendships have become the talk of the house. "Asha and Muniamma fight over who got the extra sweet or a better dress, but they always come back. Their cots are side by side," shares Meena. Residents eagerly await visits from family; one woman even saved a peda served to her at lunch to share with her grandchild.

The NGO was started by businessman-turned-philanthropist Ravi V Melwani after he embarked on a spiritual journey. It has helped about 2-3% of its residents reintegrate into society by supporting them in running shops or driving autorickshaws.

The team finds it especially heartening when they can help reunite missing individuals with their families. One man had fractured his skull in a road accident. During his time at the shelter, staff noticed he was fixated on water tankers passing outside the gate. They decided to show him moving vehicles daily, and his memory slowly returned. He recalled he was a lorry driver from Hoskote, and provided his family's contact information. He also remembered he had been drinking while driving and vowed never to touch alcohol again.

Nisha* was found at KSR Railway Station. Her eyes were unresponsive, and she sat there with the dead body of her three-day-old baby. Despite being rushed for treatment, she suffered a heart attack and partial paralysis. As she recovered and returned to her cheerful self, she shared her story. She had fled Bihar after her father-in-law allegedly made sexual advances toward her. An aunt in Bengaluru had promised her shelter but stopped answering calls once she arrived. She has since returned home.

Equally rewarding is the trust residents place in the staff, knowing they will always be cared for. Divya recalls Albert*, a happy-go-lucky man in his 50s who had befriended 35 geese at their Bannerghatta shelter. A relative suddenly took him home for "vacation" without saying when he could return. Six months later, he made his way back on his own, riding in an auto, battered by a terrible allergy. Another man, who went to Mysuru to stay with his daughter, ended up on the streets begging. When the police caught him, he simply gave them the shelter's address. He knew the home, with its lush greenery and sunny courtyard, would always welcome him.

*(*Names changed to protect identity.)*

(To report homeless persons in Bengaluru, dial the GBA helpline 1533.)

Like this story?
Email: dhonsat@deccanherald.co.in

MUSICANA

IDM that blends static with emotion

Bengaluru artiste Dolorblind's latest EP combines hip-hop, pop and ambient music, writes Sathvi G Bhat

Visual designer and music producer 'Dolorblind' aka Rohan Sinha's new EP, 'No Signal', explores a sonic landscape that encompasses pop, hip-hop, ambient music and IDM (Intelligent Dance Music), with intense visual interpretations.

The EP, which was released in March, marks a fearless shift in his creative journey. His earlier work was much softer in comparison. "It is a mix of both dance music and ambient low-tempo music. It is kind of a challenging space, but I didn't let that hold me back and made something a little adventurous and experimental," he states.

Sinha, whose stage name was inspired by Kid Cudi, sees no friction between design and music. "I always looked at them as one thing. Music is also designing in a way — you're designing sounds, layering them and working with them. So it has a different technicality but the same method."

Sinha's stint with music began in school and developed in college. He came out with his first EP titled 'Dolores' in 2017, and released his first collaboration with the American artiste '1200' the following year. It was also in 2017 that he joined the 'Jwala Collective', a young record label focused on indie electronic music.

The journey with 'No Signal' began in 2023 when Sinha participated in the One Beat programme in Florida, USA.

The EP starts with 'UVB-76', a collaboration with Indonesian artiste Hara aka Rara Sekar Larasati. It gets its name from the digital satellite signal, UVB76, which he manipulated and repurposed into the track. Other tracks on the EP include 'Ombré', which captures the movement of colour gradients and the descent of a meteorite, set against early 2000s hip-hop textures, and 'OD', which uses unpolished sounds to symbolise schizophrenia and anxiety, culminating in an intense, cinematic climax. The track 'Silo' is composed of an unorganised rapid burst of sounds, while 'NRG', a collaboration with artiste Rounak Maiti, combines synthetic sounds with organic vocals. The EP closes with 'OMNI 2'. It continues the chaos of earlier tracks and delves into emotional turbulence, internal conflict, and destruction.

The tracks carry Sinha's signature artistic style and visual interpretations. He shares, "'No Signal' comes from me visualising myself staring at a television with static. And it's almost like waiting for a signal that would make me happy, for the screen to change, or for something new. Because we're so used to waiting for what's next. That's a high we're always chasing."

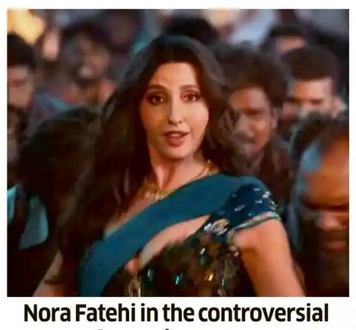
His live performances also carry the same intense and emotive undertones. "Even when I perform live, I hold onto the maximalist and chaotic visuals," he says.

Rohan Sinha aka Dolorblind released his first EP in 2017. PIC: SHREY GUPTA

When is naughty not so nice?

ITEM NUMBERS

Some lyricists can be sensual and erotic without being crass and raunchy, some just don't know the difference. **Pranati A S** weighs in on the furore over the Kannada song 'Sarse ninna serga'



Nora Fatehi in the controversial song Sarse ninn serga sarse from 'KD: The Devil'.

Jinke sar ho ishq ki chaaon
paaon ke neeche jaanat hogi...
(The heads that have the shade of love, heaven will be under their feet.)

Gulzar's lines from 'Chaiyya chaiyya'—an item song that is a poetic and spiritual expression of love with Malaika Arora and Shah Rukh Khan dancing atop a moving train—comes back to mind as we witness a nationwide backlash against the item number from the Kannada film 'KD: The Devil'.

The last time we saw such uproar was against the 1993 song 'Choli ke peeche', and it featured Sanjay Dutt, who is also the actor in the song from 'KD'.

The 'Khalnayak' song's introductory lines were slammed as they were considered sexually suggestive and vulgar. Considering how verbal sexual harassment was rampant, the outrage was justified.

However, over the years, the song has been revisited from a feminist lens; pop culture critics argue that though it has suggestive lyrics and is choreographed for the male gaze, the female voice is not entirely passive. Many such item songs are an example of how women's voices can exist even within commercial, male-dominated formats.

'Oo antava' from 'Pushpa: The Rise' is critiquing male hypocrisy and how society judges female sexuality. Samanth Ruth Prabhu features in the song. She says (as the lyrics go), 'Whether I wear a sari or a skirt, you men will look at me in a lecherous manner'. She goes ahead and questions the men looking lustfully at her, 'Am I not right?' The song has some interesting observations offering social commentary.

Well-known writer, poet, and lyricist Jayant Kaikini cites the song 'Bayi basale soppu' written by Yogaraj Bhat from 'Parapancha'. Recalling the lines, 'kuniyavru ladiesu, bayyoru ladiesu, naav bari audiencu. Alvenri?' sung in V Harikrishna's subtly "helpless" voice, he says the item song feels fresh and innovative, metaphorically ridiculing the hypocrisies of a conservative society. Female singer Indu Nagaraj continues with 'haud ri, neeveshtu decent-u nangoblige gottu, nanantu yarigu helalri' (only I know how decent you are, don't worry, I won't tell anyone), further reinforcing the song's playful critique.

It is no secret that filmmakers have long relied on item songs, earlier known as cabaret songs, to sell their movies. However, only a handful have used the format to articulate female desire and agency.

"Look past the sensual imagery and stylised settings, and many of these songs are layered with ideas and philosophies of their own," says journalist Pragyan Mohanty who writes about vintage Hindi cinema. She cites Malaika Arora's sensuous chartbuster 'Maahi ve' ('Kaante', 2002) which became a lounge anthem. "At its core, it is a wistful reflection on love and fate. Dev Kohli's lyrics, 'Kismat de maare assi ki kariye, kismat te kiska zor hai', capture the film's overarching arc even within the confines of an item song," she says.

"Again, in 'O Saki' ('Musafir', 2004), Kohli opts for playful verbal sparring between a cupbearer and her patron—a familiar trope in old Hindi film songs about alcohol—in a techno-club number," Pragyan elaborates.

Item numbers can also be satirical. Take the 'Imported kamariya' song from 'Shanghai' for instance. The lines go: 'Door sehar se humka laga India aisa place. Oont-gaay pe aata jaata hoga sara des. Hum kaah jaane. Skyscraper hoga har kone kone pe.' It translates to 'They brought me from a far away city to a place called India. I assumed everyone travels on a camel or cow back. Little did I know there are skyscrapers in every corner.' The song, written by Anvita Dutt Guptan, makes a pleasant and humorous commentary about the stereotypical view of India through a foreigner's eyes.

Just as courtesans once expressed their desires, longings, and 'dard' through their songs, pop culture, through item songs, acknowledges the realities of bar dancers and village performers, using strong, metaphorical expressions of desire. The item numbers reflect the longing and rebellion of lives often sidelined by society, even though most of these songs are written by men. 'Ee majavada mabbu' from 'Junglee' written by Yogaraj Bhat, Gulzar's 'Kajra re' and Amitabh Bhattacharya's 'Aira gaira' are good examples.

Some female lyricists like Anvita Dutt and Kausar Munni are reimagining item songs with quirky lyrics. In 'Jhalla walla', Kausar writes: 'O aashiqon mein jiska title Titanic/ Muaah kinara dikha karke dooba de gaya' (The one who is called the Titanic of lovers, he showed me the shore and got me drowned).

Kaikini says, "In most item songs, the lead woman plays a ring master with men reduced to mere flickers of her gaze. It could be Kajra re's captivating eyes or Jokae's 'Kannu katthiya anchu' (commanding, weapon-like gaze)."

Gulzar is the master of item numbers. The metaphors are deep, rich in imagery, often taken from folk and colloquial sayings. In 'Beedi jalaile', when Bipasha's Billo tells Vivek Oberoi's Kesu to light a beedi from her jigar to beat the cold, the 'jigar' (spark) can mean anything—her passion, love or even the spark of her rebellious spirit. Many people still do not know what "elaichi khilana" in the song or "namak ishq ka" (in 'Namak') means.

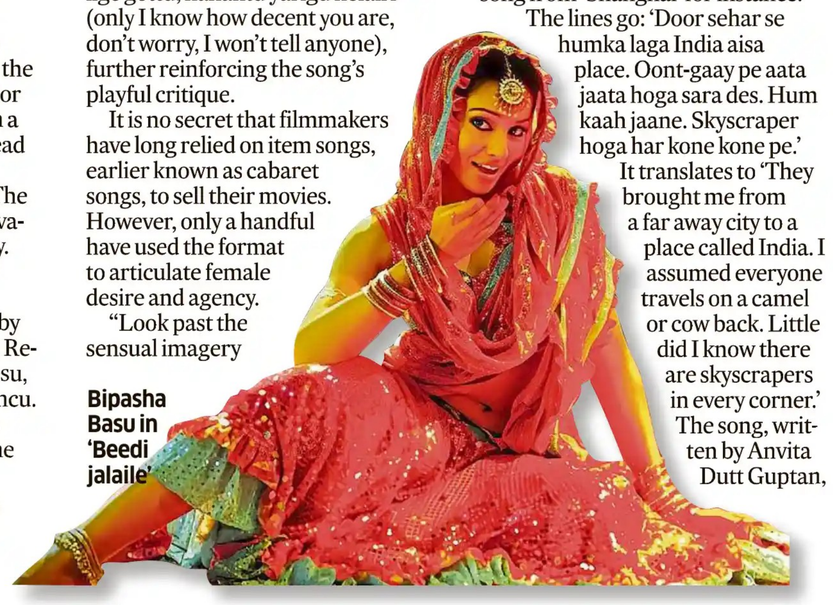
There is a thin yet visible line between risqué and vulgar. As one filmmaker told *Showtime*, "Risque is when beauty is described. Vulgarity is when you describe what you would do to it." Much like how Sreeleela in the song 'Kissik' from 'Pushpa: The Rule' tells the lustful men around her—there is a boundary and they must not cross it—filmmakers too should stay within the line. It is the breach of this line that has landed the 'Sarse ninna serga sarse' song in soup!

Comparing item songs to the queen in a deck of cards, Kaikini says they can transform a film's rhythm, but only when placed with care, creativity, and clear intent.

In the end, item songs remain flawed yet culturally significant spaces of expression. Unfortunately, regardless of the commentary they attempt, audiences often reduce them to the spectacle of semi-clad women, framed through a persistent male gaze. "That is the irony," says Kaikini.

What happened

The Hindi version of 'Sarse ninna serga sarse' from 'KD: The Devil' sparked nationwide backlash over its vulgar lyrics, which are similarly explicit in Kannada. Nora Fatehi said she only understood the meaning after hearing the Hindi version and was unaware of it during filming three years ago. Director Prem, who also wrote the Kannada lyrics, apologised, and claimed misinterpretation. He intends to rewrite the lyrics. Hindi lyricist Raqueeb Alam said he simply translated the original and felt misled.



Bipasha Basu in 'Beedi jalaile'

This year, the conversation shifted from red carpet glitz to a woman's grit, writes Vivekananda Kodandaraman

Arkapaw, first woman to win Oscar for cinematography

A scene from 'Sinners'.

The Oscars have often relied on hosts, mostly men, making jokes about inclusivity and marginalised identities that provoke laughter instead of results. People talk about it briefly and move on.

Against such a backdrop who would have thought a woman with Filipino roots would make history?

Autumn Durald Arkapaw became the first woman to win the Best Cinematography Award for 'Sinners' at the recently concluded Oscars—a first in the Awards' 97-year history.

Arkapaw's acceptance speech was historic and momentous. "I'm so honoured to be here and I really want all the women in the room to stand up, because I feel like I don't get here without you guys (sic)," she said at the ceremony.

She is only the fourth woman to be nominated in this category after Rachel Morrison for 'Mudbound' (2017), Ari Wegner for 'The Power of the Dog' (2021), and Mandy Walker for 'Elvis' (2022). Arkapaw is also the first woman to shoot a feature film on 65mm and IMAX.

The widescreen shots in 'Sinners', directed by Ryan Coogler, became the most talked about aspect upon its release last year. Viewers called it an immersive experience. Arkapaw says it was a "genuine thrill" to shoot using Kodak Ektachrome in 15-perf IMAX. In an interview, she explained, "I captured some handheld portrait-style shots with the IMAX camera, not knowing exactly where they would land in the cut. Ryan used them so beautifully in the flashback sequence, and it ended up becoming a real iconic moment in the film."

Childhood fascination

As a child, she spent a lot of time taking photographs. In many of her interviews, she recalls travelling frequently with her grandparents, which was when she would experiment with photography. Her interest in films also began when she was a child. It was her mother who played a significant role in instilling in her a love for cinema. She would often take her along to the movies.

But it was not until college that she began to think about how films are made. She dreamt of shooting a big action film, even at a time when such opportunities were rare for female DOPs.

Arkapaw studied art history at Loyola Marymount University in California with the aim of becoming a curator. She was fascinated by the films of Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese. When she tried to get into the American Film Institute Conservatory's cinematography programme, her application was rejected due to a 'lack of experience'. She then worked as an assistant on the Sundance Channel's documentary TV series, 'On the Road in America', with cinematographer Guy Livneh. She was then accepted at AFI in 2006. 'Macho' (2006), a mumblecore film that she made with her friends at AFI, was her first film as a cinematographer.

Autumn Durald Arkapaw

Road to Oscars

After graduating from AFI in 2009, she worked in an advertising company and made short films on weekends. Her first film was 'Palo Alto' (2013) by Gia Coppola. One of her major films as cinematographer was 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever' (2022). When Rachel Morrison could not return for the sequel of 'Black Panther' (2018), she recommended Arkapaw to Ryan Coogler. Eight years later, the same duo came together and created history.

'Sinners' (2026) made history at the Academy Awards securing a record-breaking 16 Oscar nominations. People were already excited about how many awards the film would receive but little did they know that Arkapaw was going to create another record which took far more time than the 16 nominations milestone.

Women at the Oscars are often discussed for what they wear on the red carpet. However, this year, a woman was being widely discussed for her work in a film that highlights Black culture and their music.

"Young girls will look up this nomination and see that film and will associate with all the people that made it, people that are people of color (sic)," she said in an interview.

MOVIE R|E|V|I|E|W|S

Heartfelt ode to a father-daughter relationship

JAGADISH ANGADI

★★★½☆

Love Mocktail 3

Kannada (Theatres)

Director: Darling Krishna

Cast: Darling Krishna, Samvrutha, Neyaara Deepak, Rekha Kudligi, Dilip Raj, B M Giriraj

'Love Mocktail' (2020) followed Adi's (Darling Krishna) journey through the bittersweet phases of teenage infatuation and mature love. The sequel (2022) explored his life after his wife Nidhi's (Milana Nagaraj) demise. The third instalment focuses on Adi's bond with his adopted daughter Ramya, renamed Nidhi.

The first movie brimmed with youthful freshness. The second was driven by intense romance. The third film shifts the emotional core to a deeply moving father-daughter relationship.

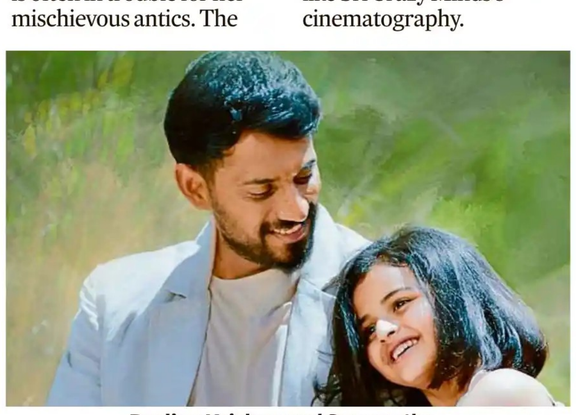
Heartfelt storytelling, evocative moments, relatable experiences, rich visuals and soothing music of the previous instalments continue in this one.

The film opens at a gathering hosted by Adi's friend Viju. Adi's friends notice his absence, prompting Viju to recount the circumstances that led to their estrangement. Adi's life takes an unexpected turn after the adoption. Standing by him through this transition is Jagga (Dilip Raj), the household cook.

Nidhi, now in school, is often in trouble for her mischievous antics. The arrival of Rukmini, an elderly woman, disrupts the balance in their lives. How Adi confronts the emotional upheaval forms a key thread of the narrative.

The narrative gains momentum in the second half with a gripping courtroom drama that keeps the audience engaged. There are some exaggerated depictions and forced subplots like references to Rajkumar, Puneeth Rajkumar, and eye donation. Darling Krishna delivers a mature performance and Samvrutha stands out with her natural presence. Neyaara Deepak makes a lasting impression.

The director skillfully balances all elements to deliver a wholesome cinematic experience. He retains the franchise's signature and its slice-of-life sensibility. Nakul Abhyankar's music blends with the story, much like Sri Crazy Minds's cinematography.



Darling Krishna and Samvrutha.

Party agenda brazenly packaged as nationalism

GURUPRASAD D N

★☆☆☆☆

Dhurandhar 2

Hindi (Theatres)

Director: Aditya Dhar

Cast: Ranveer Singh, R Madhavan, Sanjay Dutt, Arjun Rampal

Ranveer plays Jassi in the sequel of 'Dhurandhar'.

In countries with strong militaries and ongoing conflicts with their neighbours, spy thrillers are often crafted to evoke nationalistic sentiment by depicting "enemy" nations in a negative light. These films are generally one-sided, and sometimes, to soften the narrative, they include a few emotional elements around the killings that drive a major part of the story. However, this sequel to 'Dhurandhar' deviates even from such nationalistic fervour, which is already devoid of humane elements, and instead is an outright propagation of the ruling BJP's agenda.

The movie begins with a flashback for Hamza (Ranveer Singh), who is actually Jaskirat (Jassi) Singh from Punjab, India. The flashback shows the circumstances that led Jassi to become an Indian spy in Pakistan.

In this one-sided film, killings are depicted like sequences in a video game. Some scenes are so gruesome—for instance, a character beheads another and plays football with the head—that it looks like the director's intention is only to create a spectacle that pushes the audience towards extreme right-wing politics.

Aditya Dhar's propaganda goes as far as depicting the Modi government's failed demonetisation as a masterstroke that disrupted terror financing networks. The film portrays Pakistani terror outfits as having funded several Indian elections (to bring favourable parties to power), and funding Kashmiri dissidents, Punjabi separatists, and Naxals, among others.

Although right-wing propaganda was evident in the first part of 'Durandhar', its sequel makes it far more explicit. Like any other production mounted on a lavish scale, 'Dhurandhar 2' like its prequel is technically sound. However, the fight sequences come across as laborious.

Films like this, which promote a political party in the name of the "nation", are far more dangerous than those with purely nationalistic storylines. At least those films attempt a humanistic approach to the conflict. The sole intention of this film is to create hostility towards "enemy" countries, and a particular religion. It presents a distorted and skewed view of India's history and politics.

A stylish return tinged with grief

RASHMI VASUDEVA

★★★½☆

Peaky Blinders: The Immortal Man

English (Netflix)

Director: Tom Harper

Cast: Cillian Murphy, Barry Keoghan, Rebecca Ferguson

Cillian Murphy in the British crime drama.

A show that ran for six seasons and spanned nearly a decade, 'Peaky Blinders' (Netflix) is opera on OTT, its impact more far-reaching than the piquing of interest in flat caps or tourists viewing Birmingham with new eyes.

Now, 'The Immortal' Man arrives as an epilogue, the atmospherics intact and the violence as pale and cold as ever. And Tommy Shelby? He remains himself, Cillian Murphy's uncanny stare into nothingness, saying more than any dialogue. Shelby is doping on grief. A bone-numbing fatigue haunts him, and he comes alive only when he "sees" the spirits that haunt his empty mansion, where he lives in seclusion, trying to write his own story.

But return he must, and he does when his estranged son, Erasmus "Duke" Shelby (Barry Keoghan), gets entangled in a Nazi plot. It is 1940, and the dark days of war are upon Old Blighty; something good must come from something bad, innit?

Intended for fans of the original series, the film can stand alone, though some moments can be puzzling. For instance, reasons for the deep bond between Shelby and his faithful sidekick "Dogs" (Packy Lee) would require some guesswork from non-fans. The makers know there is no outdoing the original, so they focus on Shelby's corroding inner self, making the film, inadvertently, a study of a man in deep sorrow.

It is a risky gamble, but the shift to Nazis as villains reframes the flatcaps as reluctant patriots, going about their business with the same aesthetics: post-modern rock BGM, stylised coal-tinged violence, and Birmingham basking in its glorious bleakness.

Pawan Kalyan plays a cop.

Pawan Kalyan delivers another disappointment

NIKHIL WAIKER

★☆☆☆☆

Ustad Bhagat Singh

Telugu (Theatres)

Director: Harish Shankar

Cast: Pawan Kalyan, Sreeleela, Raashii Khanna

In the 1950s, 'the hero's journey' became a trope in cinema across the globe. In India, cult classics like 'Sholay' and 'Teen Murti' ardently followed this structure while adapting it to the cultural landscape. However, the structure matured over time, with the situational conflicts bringing depth to the hero's character and leading to fresher narratives.

The Telugu film industry, however, seems to have stagnated with this structure in its infancy, leading to films like 'Gabbar Singh' and 'Ustad Bhagat Singh'. The lethargy to move beyond the typecast roles, predictable plot lines and character conflicts, and formulaic approaches to editing, camera work, mise-en-scene, and music makes the film exceptionally bad. Pawan Kalyan (playing Bhagat Singh) takes up the role of a police officer (just like in 'Gabbar Singh'). There is so little character development for the female leads, Sreeleela and Rashi Khanna, that their roles are almost redundant unless Kalyan's character engages with them. Most of Kalyan's films seem like they are designed solely for him to take centrestage. The film is no exception.

As for the plot, Bhagat Singh seems to be up against a larger nexus of villains, extending upto terrorism and narco-trafficking. Through the flashbacks of his days as a fervent IPS officer and his run-ins with the then corrupt MLA Nalla Nagappa (Parthiban), the story unfolds over drug trafficking. The entire plot is just like 'Gabbar Singh', with the setting and the primary motive changed. This formulaic design seems to have plagued much of the industry, so much that films feel like they're manufactured in a factory rather than made with artistic fervour.

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to dhonsat @deccanherald.co.in

Charismatic wins Adjudicate Cup

KOLKATA RESULTS

Rutherford Alfrod-trained Charismatic, ridden by Antony Raj, won the Adjudicate Cup, the feature event of the races on Friday.

1. Predator Handicap - 1600M: Royal Member (Suraj Narredu) 1; Carnation (N Darshan) 2; Pyrgos (Hasib Alam) 3; Northbound (Varun) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, 5-1/4, 3L. T: 1:43.22. TB: Javed Khan: Royal Member.

2. Kings Academy Plate - 1100M: Peaberry (Trevor Patel) 1; Tekton (Imran Chisty) 2; Fifty Shades (Farid Ansari) 3; Knotty Nash (Suraj Narredu) 4; Wb: Shd, 1-1/4, 3-1/2L. T: 1:07.13. TB: Aashay Doctor. Fav: Peaberry.

3. Sky Classic Handicap - 1400M: Conjurer (Antony Raj) 1; Blue God (Gaurav Singh) 2; Dubai Ruler (Trevor Patel) 3; Cat Whiskers (Vaibhav) 4; Wb: 5, Shd, 2-3/4L. T: 1:25.57. TB: Rutherford Alford. Fav: Conjurer.

4. Amberetta Handicap - 1100M: Casha (Vikrant) 1; Roman Spirit (Gaurav Singh) 2; Superlative (Imran Chisty) 3; Blinky Bill (Suran Narredu) 4; Wb: 3, Shd, 1L. T: 1:05.03. TB: Ritesh. Fav: Morano.

5. Adjudicate Cup - 1600M: Charismatic (Antony Raj) 1; King Louis (Suraj Narredu) 2; Ruling Star (Vishal Bunde) 3; Glorious King (Nikhil Naidu) 4; Wb: Shd, 2-1/2, 4L. T: 1:38.60. TB: Rutherford Alford. Fav: Charismatic.

6. Alamnac Handicap- 1400M: Lochs And Glens (Suraj Narredu) 1; Priceless Prince (Nikhil Naidu) 2; Ananta Sukha (Farid Ansari) 3; Rosalia (Trevor Patel) 4; Wb: 6-1/4, 1-1/4, 2L. T: 1:26.17. TB: Neil Darashah. Fav: Laamika.

Bengaluru Dividends

I race: Rs 12w; 10, 10p; Fc: Rs 26; Q: Rs 19; Shp: Rs 20; Thp: Rs 27; Tri: Rs 33 & 28; Ex: Rs 58 & 16. **II race:** Rs 19w; 11, 31p; Fc: Rs 138; Q: Rs 70; Shp: Rs 36; Thp: Rs 20; Tri: Rs 272 & 52; Ex: Rs 298 & 86. **III race:** Rs 19w; 10, 24, 11p; Fc: Rs 200; Q: Rs 138; Shp: Rs 83; Thp: Rs 35; Tri: Rs 249 & 73; Ex: Rs 6,486 & 3,243. **IV race:** Rs 215w; 46, 12, 14p; Fc: Rs 582; Q: Rs 1,004; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs; 45; Tri: Rs 6,645 & 1,898; Ex: Rs 13,193 & 16,962. **V race:** Rs 26w; 14, 13p; Fc: Rs 73; Q: Rs 35; Shp: Rs 30; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 231 & 117; Ex: Rs 464 & 343. **VI race:** Rs 30w; 13, 35, 17p; Fc: Rs 2,065; Q: Rs 385; Shp: Rs 71; Thp: Rs 43; Tri: Rs 10,125 & 723; Ex: Rs 20,186 & 4,325.

Jackpot: Rs 31,988 (12). **Runner-up:** Rs 1,696 (97). **I treble:** Rs 114 (290). **II treble:** Rs 4,029 (16).

Scaramouche for feature

MUMBAI SELECTIONS

Scaramouche, to be ridden by Sandesh, will garner the maximum support in the Free Press Journal Trophy, the feature event of the races to be run over a sprint on Saturday. The first race starts at 5 pm.

1. Mid - Day Trophy - 2000M: Manwar 1, Bright Button 2, Allez L Etoie 2, Manwar 3.

2. Racingpulse.In Trophy - 1400M: Youremyeyesbaby 1, Red Rose 2, Remarkable 3.

3. Indiarace.com Trophy - 1200M: Paloma 1, Organised Chaos 2, Funny Bunny 3.

4. Race Mirror Trophy - 1200M: Key West 1, Aeon Flux 2, Jagger 3.

5. Hindu Trophy - 1400M: Vegatha 1, Matisse 2, Spanish Eyes 3.

6. Free Press Journal Trophy - 1200M: Scaramouche 1, Big Bay 2, Art Collector 3.

7. Times Of India Trophy - 1000M: Desert Classic 1, House Of Lords 2, Ekla Cholo 3.

Day's best: Desert Classic. **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. **Treble:** 4, 5, 6.

Five-time champions boast of world-class options as they seek their way back to the top

Fallen giants MI bank on BATTING FIREPOWER

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

IPL 2026 — 7 days to go

A batting line-up oozing with power, pedigree and plenty of big-match players, and a bowling attack that features the best pacer in the world, will hold crucial as fallen giants Mumbai Indians plot their way back to the top this year after five seasons of average returns.

Just a cursory glance at the five-time champions Mumbai Indians' squad, especially their batting unit, is enough to send shivers down the spines of bowlers from nine other franchises. For the opening slots, they have Rohit Sharma, Quinton de Kock and Ryan Rickelton, while the middle-order boasts of Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya and Sherfane Rutherford. Add all-rounders Corbin Bosch and Mitchell Santner and Will Jacks to the mix, and Mumbai Indians have one of the most fearsome and experienced batting line-ups this IPL.

Former skipper Rohit, who has embraced fitness like never before and looks the fittest he ever has in a storied career, will either pair up with last season's partner Rickelton or de Kock, the South African who returned to the franchise during the mini auctions last year.

For the 38-year-old Rohit, who captained the side in all of their championship victories, this IPL will be a very important one to keep his dream of playing the ODI World Cup next year alive. While there's no immediate threat to his spot in the national side despite talents bursting through the seams and waiting to take his place, a strong IPL will reiterate his undying passion for the game.

The one who revolutionised India's batting approach in limited-overs with his fearless batting, Rohit has worked extremely hard behind the scenes — be it the gym or 'nets' sessions — over the last few months to ensure he's at his best for this high-octane tournament.

This IPL will also be very important for Pandya, who will be looking to prove his captaincy credentials. His first year as the skipper with MI in 2024 didn't go well, with fans openly booing him and venting their ire for removing the much-loved Rohit from the job. The franchise stuck with Pandya, and although the gritty cricketer led them to the playoffs last year and earned the respect of the MI faithful, he still isn't as revered as Rohit. That may never change, but Pandya, one of the superstars of India's World Cup-winning side, will be determined to prove he's a leader in his own right.

As mentioned, MI have very little to worry about their batting, with many of them being accomplished names in the industry. Not just frontline, but they have enough world-class back-up options too, which is certain to give the think-tank a happy headache.

Perhaps the only worry is the lack of strong support for Jasprit Bumrah, who is operating at a whole different level. Trent Boult was their leading wicket-taker last season with 22 scalps, but the New Zealander was expensive at 8.96, which has been a concern throughout his career. Pandya can take the new ball and bowl at the death too, but he can be inconsistent.

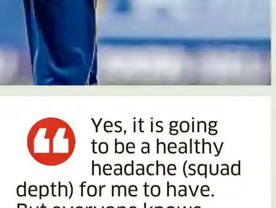
There's Deepak Chahar and Shardul Thakur, but both medium pacers can be brilliant one day and ordinary another. That'll mean imports like Bosch, Jacks, and Santner will have to share the load, but which of them will play is the puzzle that'll be hard to solve for MI.

Nonetheless, they have a squad filled with champion players, and if they combine beautifully, they can lay their hands on a sixth trophy.

Squad: Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Robin Minz, Sherfane Rutherford, Ryan Rickelton, Quinton de Kock, Danish Malewar, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Naman Dhir, Mitchell Santner, Raj Angad Bawa, Atharva Ankolekar, Mayank Rawat, Corbin Bosch, Will Jacks, Shardul Thakur, Trent Boult, Mayank Markande, Deepak Chahar, Ashwani Kumar, Raghu Sharma, Mohammad Izhar, Allah Ghazanfar, Jasprit Bumrah.

Champions:
2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020.

> Yes, it is going to be a healthy headache (squad depth) for me to have. But everyone knows how we operate in the camp. At the right time, we'll make the decisions. It's going to be tough decisions, but we'll make sure that the best decisions are being made.
>
> **Mahela Jayawardene**
> Head Coach



RCB sweat it out sans Kohli

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

Rajat Patidar. FILE PHOTO

Intensity and skillset were the flavours on offer as Royal Challengers Bengaluru, sans Virat Kohli, went through a three-hour long training session at the Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Friday.

Under the watchful eyes of head coach Andy Flower, the main focus was ample batting time for skipper Rajat Patidar, Devdutt Padikkal and Venkatesh Iyer.

Patidar first started off on one of the side nets, facing two throwdown specialists. After getting his eye in, he focussed on range hitting and smashed a few along the V.

Patidar then shifted to the main net and faced full-length deliveries, targetting the mid-wicket region against the net bowlers.

While the sound of the Patidar's bat echoed across an empty stadium, there was a sense of frustration throughout Iyer's session as he struggled with his timing.

Following a brief conversation with batting coach Dinesh Karthik, he started to grow in confidence and smashed a few deliveries into the netting.

Iyer's session did not end there as he later moved to another nets and played deliveries on the fuller length while continuing his conversion with Karthik.

Padikkal spent a good 20 minutes facing good-length deliveries at the main nets. While there were a few play and misses, the southpaw looked at ease throughout his session. He was accompanied by Englishman Jordan Cox, who mainly worked on his range hitting.

Padikkal then switched to the side net, where he took on throwdown specialists and unfurled his full range of strokes.

Yash Dayal, who is embroiled with off-field issues, continues to remain absent from RCB's training sessions.

Rana ruled out of entire IPL

KOLKATA, PTI

In a big blow to Kolkata Knight Riders, pacer Harshit Rana **(in pic)** was on Friday ruled out of the entire IPL 2026 owing to the ligament injury that he sustained during a warm-up match ahead of the recent T20 World Cup.

The fast bowler suffered a ligament strain in his right knee during India's T20 World Cup warm-up game against South Africa, following which he underwent surgery in February, needing an extensive rehabilitation process.

"It is a big blow because Harshit Rana has been an integral part of this team for the last couple of seasons, also the championship season. Over the last year, he's really grown as a cricketer," KKR head coach Abhishek Nayar said, without giving a confirmed timeline for Rana's return to action.

"We will always miss Harshit Rana, it's not easy to replace him. But over the last few days, we've looked at a few bowlers as to who fits in and who can do that role to the best of their prowess. Hopefully, we'll take a call in a couple of days," Nayar added.

Karnataka women storm into semis

BENGALURU, DHNS: Shreya S Chavan slammed an exact half-century and teammate Saloni P shone with a four-wicket haul as Karnataka defeated Uttarakhand by 42 runs to march into the semifinals of the BCCI Under-23 Women's One Day Trophy in Ranchi.

Following a middle-order collapse that saw them in a spot at 105/5, Karnataka fought back through No. 7 Shreya's counter-attacking 63-ball 50 and a gritty 45 off 71 balls from No. 5 Chandasi K to post 221 all out in 49.2 overs. Karnataka then produced a collectively strong bowling show with Saloni shining brightest with a 4/18 effort to dismiss Uttarakhand for 180 in 48.3 overs. BG Tejashwini (2/20) and Niki Prasad (2/32) bagged two wickets apiece.

In the semifinals at the JSCA International Stadium Complex, Ranchi on Sunday, Karnataka will take on Maharashtra.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 221 all out in 49.2 overs (Rachitha Hatwar 29, Krishika Reddy 31, Chandasi Krishnamurthy 45, Shreya S Chavan 50; Nisha Mishra 2-41, Kanika 2-38, Kalpana Verma 3-42, Sabhya 2-34) bt Uttarakhand: 180 all out in 48.3 overs (Kalpana Verma 41 n.o., Kanika 35; BG Tejashwini 2-20, Niki Prasad 2-32, Saloni P 4-18).

◆ ON TV ◆

FOOTBALL

EPL: Brighton & Hove Albion vs Liverpool **(6 pm)**, Fulham vs Burnley **(8:30 pm)**, Everton vs Chelsea **(11 pm)**, Leeds United vs Brentford **(1:30 pm, Sunday)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network & JioHotstar.**

ISL: Mohammedan SC vs East Bengal FC **(5 pm)**, Kerala Blasters FC vs Punjab FC **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

BADMINTON

Orleans Masters: Semifinals **(2:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

Linette slays Swiatek

MIAMI, AFP

Poland's Magda Linette returns during her shock second-round victory over compatriot Iga Swiatek at the Miami Open on Thursday. AFP

Iga Swiatek crashed out of the Miami Open second round Thursday as 50th-ranked fellow Pole Magda Linette fought back for a 1-6, 7-5, 6-3 victory over the six-time Grand Slam champion.

Reigning Wimbledon champion Swiatek, who won the Miami Open in 2022, suffered her first opening loss at a tournament since the 2021 WTA Finals. It's just the latest disappointment for Swiatek, who was eliminated in the quarter-finals at the Australian Open and in the WTA 1000 events in Doha and Indian Wells.

Swiatek's compatriot Linette had to dig deep after Swiatek -- who won their last encounter 6-1, 6-1 -- raced through the opening set in 33 minutes.

Linette advanced to a third-round matchup against 20-year-old Alexandra Eala of the Philippines, a 6-7 (6/8), 6-3, 6-3 winner over Germany's Laura Siegemund.

Former world number one Venus Williams, 45, lost her first-round match to Britain's Francesca Jones 7-5, 7-5 after one hour and 51 minutes.

Jones advanced to a second-round match against fifth seed Pegula, last year's Miami runner-up to Sabalenka.

On the men's side 19-year-old Brazilian Joao Fonseca outlasted Hungary's Fabian Marozsan 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, to book a second-round match with world number one Carlos Alcaraz.

French 17-year-old Moise Kouame beat qualifier Zachary Svajda 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 to become the youngest player to claim an ATP Masters 1000 victory since Rafael Nadal in Hamburg in 2003.

Kouame, who received a wild card invitation, next faces 21st seed Jiri Lehecka of Czech Republic.

India women to play one-off Test in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, PTI: The Indian women's team will play a one-off Test during its tour of South Africa later this year, which will also feature a three-match ODI series, Cricket South Africa (CSA) said on Friday.

CSA said the Test will be held in Gqeberha from December 20 to 23, while the ODIs are scheduled from December 9 to 15 across Potchefstroom, Bloemfontein and Cape Town. "The Proteas will face India in a three-match ICC Women's Championship (IWC) ODI series from 09–15 December, with the JB Marks Oval in Potchefstroom hosting the series opener before Mangaung Oval in Bloemfontein and the Newlands Cricket Ground stage the second and third matches," CSA said in a statement.

It will be the fourth red-ball contest between the two nations.

Starc, Hazlewood, Cummins to miss start of the league

MELBOURNE, PTI: Four leading Australian pacers, including Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc **(in pic)** and Josh Hazlewood, are set to miss the start of the upcoming Indian Premier League season later this month, dealing an early setback to their respective franchises.

According to a report in cricket.com.au, Starc, Cummins and Hazlewood will miss at least the start of IPL while Nathan Ellis is set to be ruled out of the tournament completely.

The report said Cricket Australia (CA) is taking a cautious approach with their pacers ahead a busy schedule from August that includes 21 Test matches in a 12-month period.

Australia will tour South Africa, India and England before defending the ODI World Cup title in 2027.

"The trio's availability will depend on progress in their return to play protocols over the next few weeks," the report said.

Test captain Cummins has featured in only one Test last summer due to a back stress injury, while Hazlewood missed the entire series due to hamstring and Achilles issues.

The duo also missed the T20 World Cup.

Starc played all five Ashes Tests and the back-end of the Big Bash League, but not the T20 World Cup as he has retired from the format.

Curran set to miss

Sam Curran, England's charismatic all-rounder, is also set to miss the upcoming Indian Premier League season for Rajasthan Royals due to a suspected groin injury, with the franchise exploring replacement options.

IN BRIEF

Shreesha steers Canara Bank

▸ Shreesha S Achar bagged a four-wicket haul and team-mate Naveen MG slammed an unbeaten half-century as Canara Bank trounced AGO Recreation Club by 8 wickets in the KSCA Group II - I Division league cum knockout tournament, reports DHNS.

Brief scores: AGO Recreation Club: 108 all out in 16.1 overs (Sharath BR 62; Rajvir Wadhwa 3-15, Shreesha S Achar 4-18) lt to Canara Bank: 112/2 in 15.4 overs (Naveen MG 50 n.o., Siddharth 37 n.o.).

Ideal SA trounce Southern Alpha

▸ Veerakannan, Karthik and Karuna scored a brace each as Ideal Sports Academy trounced Southern Alpha Sports Association 7-2 in the KSHA B Division Hockey League Championship on Friday, reports DHNS.

Results: Ideal Sports Academy: 7 (Veerakannan 6th, 49th, Karthik 14th, 27th, Karuna 31st, 49th, Cairappa KA 44th) bt Southern Alpha Sports Association: 2 (Santosh 4th, 45th).

NZ take lead over SA

▸ A miserly bowling display helped give New Zealand a 2-1 lead in their T20 series against South Africa with an eight-wicket win on Friday, reports AFP from Auckland.

South Africa were restricted to 136/9 at a postage stamp Eden Park ground. Tom Latham later guided the hosts to victory, making 63.

Brief scores: South Africa: 136/9 in 20 overs (George Linde 23, Nqobani Mokoena 26 n.o.; Kyle Jamieson 2-42, Mitchell Santner 2-21, Ben Sears 2-27) lt to New Zealand: 137/2 in 16.2 overs (Devon Conway 39, Tom Latham 63 n.o.). **Result:** NZ won by eight wickets. **Series:** NZ lead 5-match series 2-1. **PoM:** Lockie Ferguson. **Next match:** March 22 (Wellington).

Messi scores 900th career goal

FORT LAUDERDALE (US), REUTERS: Lionel Messi **(in pic)** scored his 900th career goal on Wednesday to become the second player to reach the mark in elite men's football after Cristiano Ronaldo.

The 38-year-old Argentine World Cup winner brought up the milestone with a left-footed strike in Inter Miami's 1-1 draw with Nashville SC in the CONCACAF Champions Cup.

The 900th goal came 21 years after Messi scored his first in senior football for Barcelona as a 17-year-old in 2005.

Inter manager Javier Mascherano said Messi's tally was "insane". "I've been lucky enough to see most, or many, of the goals he's scored, much closer than you all, and that's a privilege," he added.

"The number we're talking about is insane, and that's why Leo is a one of a kind."

Messi, who has won the Ballon d'Or eight times, reached the landmark in his 1,142nd appearance for club and country, nearly 100 games fewer than Ronaldo, who took 1,236 games to reach the milestone in September 2024. Portuguese forward Ronaldo has now reached 965 goals and has targeted the 1,000-mark before he quits the game.

The majority of Messi's goals came during his spell at Barcelona, where he scored 672 times.

Ronnie fires 153-point break

Seven-time world champion Ronnie O'Sullivan made professional snooker history on Friday by crafting the highest break ever of 153 at the World Open in China, reports AFP from Beijing.

The 50-year-old Englishman pulled off the feat against Ryan Day of Wales on his way to sealing his place in the semifinals in Yushan with a dominant 5-0 victory.

O'Sullivan us regarded as the best player snooker has ever produced.

Anahat, Tanvi storm into semis

MUMBAI, PTI

Anahat Singh

Top seed Anahat Singh and unseeded compatriot Tanvi Khanna ensured a strong Indian presence in the women's singles semifinals of the JSW Indian Open after winning their respective quarterfinal matches here on Friday.

However, veteran Joshna Chinappa bowed out of the competition following a 1–3 defeat to Egypt's Nadien El Hammamy.

In another quarterfinal clash, second seed Hana Moataz fought hard to edge past eighth seed Yasshmita Jadishkumar of Malaysia in a five-game thriller, 3–2 (11-8, 8-11, 7-11, 11-7, 11-8).

In the semifinals on Saturday, Anahat will face Tanvi, while Moataz will square off against El Hammamy.

Anahat underlined her status as one of the top contenders for the title with a dominant 3–0 (11-2, 11-6, 11-4) victory over Malaysia's Sehveetrraa Kumar.

The top seed raced through the opening game with ease, taking it 11-2 without much effort.

Kumar offered a stronger challenge in the second game, but Anahat's blend of power and clever deception helped her maintain control and clinch it 11-6.

The third game followed a similar pattern as Anahat dictated the pace and cruised to an emphatic 11-4 win, sealing a comfortable passage into the last four.

Meanwhile, Tanvi produced one of the standout performances of the day by upsetting fourth seed Ainaa Amani 3–1.

Earlier, Joshna began confidently against El Hammamy but gradually found it difficult to counter the Egyptian's deceptive movement and sharp cross-court shots.

TRACK & FIELD

India to host World Indoor Athletics

Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar chosen as venue for the prestigious event

NEW DELHI, PTI

India will host the World Indoor Athletics Championships for the first time in 2028 with Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Stadium Complex chosen as the venue. REUTERS FILE PHOTO

India will host the World Indoor Athletics Championships for the first time in 2028 in Bhubaneswar as the international body on Thursday awarded the hosting rights of the prestigious event to the country at its council meeting in Torun, Poland.

The decision was taken at the World Athletics Council meeting a day before the start of World Indoor Athletics Championships (March 20-22) in the Polish city.

"India has been awarded the World Indoor Athletics Championships for the year 2028," World Athletics vice-president Adille Sumariwalla told PTI from Poland. AFI had revealed its bid for the 2028 World Indoor Championships earlier this year.

A two-member team from World Athletics had visited the state-of-the-art indoor facility at the Kalinga Stadium Complex in Bhubaneswar in January.

Along with Sumariwalla, also a World Athletics Council member and a former Athletics Federation of India (AFI) president, officials of the Odisha government had travelled to the Polish city.

AFI president Bahadur Singh Sagoo said the development was an indication of the growing stature of Indian athletics in the international stage.

"The World Athletics 2028 Indoor Athletics Championships allotted to India mark the growing stature of Indian athletics. Indian track and field has been in sharp focus since ace javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra won back-to-back Olympic and World medals," he said.

New Zealand had also earlier expressed interest to host the 2028 World Indoor Championships, a biennial showpiece for indoor events.

"Since India was in the fray, we were not allowed inside when the decision to choose the host city was taken. Later World Athletics announced that India has been awarded the Championships," technical committee chairman and former AFI secretary Ravinder Chaudhry said from Poland.

World Indoor Championships has 26 events -- 13 each for men and women -- to be competed across three days. The 13 events are 60m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 3000m, 60m hurdles, 4x400m relay, high jump, pole vault, long jump, triple jump, shot put, heptathlon (pentathlon for women).

Tanvi, Isharani enter semifinals of Orleans Masters

ORLEANS, PTI: India's Tanvi Sharma stunned Japan's sixth seed Natsuki Nidaira in straight games to storm into the semifinals of the USD 250,000 Orleans Masters Super 300 badminton tournament here on Friday.

The 17-year-old registered a 21-14, 21-14 in 43 minutes in the women's singles quarterfinals.

Isharani Baruah won after Malvika Bansod retired while lagging 9-21, 7-15 in an all Indian clash.

Mahuchikh delivers a dominant show

TORUN (POLAND), AFP

Ukraine's world record holder Yaroslava Mahuchikh **(in pic)** dominated the women's high jump to win the first gold on offer at the World Indoor Championships in Torun, Poland on Friday.

Mahuchikh, the Olympic champion who won a first world indoor title in Belgrade in 2022, cleared a best of 2.01 metres.

Australia's reigning world indoor and outdoor champion Nicola Olyslagers shared silver with Serbia's Angelica Topic and Ukrainian Yuliya Levchenko.

The four medallists were the sole jumpers left in competition at the 1.96m mark.

The bar was raised to 1.99m and first up was Mahuchikh. She sailed over, but so did the three others.

Mahuchikh kept up the pressure with a first time clearance of 2.01m.

All three of her rivals struggled with that height, registering three failures apiece to hand victory to the Ukrainian, who had three failed attempts at 2.06m.

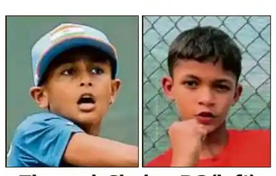
One of the stars of the three-day competition in Poland is Britain's Keely Hodgkinson, who smashed the indoor 800m world record last month.

Injuries have prevented the 24-year-old from taking part in the past three editions of the world indoors.

Karnataka duo in Indian squad

BENGALURU, DHNS: India's No. 2 Thanush Shekar BC and No. 3 Dhanush SM -- both from Karnataka -- have secured two of the three spots in the nation's boys' team for the ITF Asia 12 & Under Team Competition – South Asia Qualifiers, set to be held at the NTA Tennis Complex in Kathmandu, Nepal from April 13 to 17.

The Bengaluru-based 12-year-olds will be joined by India's No. 1 Riaan Atul Nandankar of Maharashtra, in a squad based on the current national rankings.



Thanush Shekar BC (left) and Dhanush SM.

Barca hand Newcastle a lesson

PARIS, AFP: Barcelona hit Newcastle United for seven to reach the Champions League quarterfinals on Wednesday, while Liverpool overturned a first-leg deficit to beat Galatasaray in their last-16 tie and both Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid advanced to the next round.

Raphinha

Raphinha and Robert Lewandowski both scored twice as La Liga leaders Barcelona tore apart Newcastle at the Camp Nou, winning 7-2 in the second leg of their last-16 encounter to progress 8-3 on aggregate.

A spectacular match saw Anthony Elanga twice score for Newcastle inside the opening half-hour to cancel out goals by Raphinha and Marc Bernal.

However, the Catalans went back in front when Lamine Yamal converted a penalty deep in first-half stoppage time to make it 3-2 on the night, and they never looked back.

Results: Barcelona: 7 (Raphinha 6th, 72nd, Bernal 18th, Yamal 45+7, Lopez 51st, Lewandowski 56th, 61st) bt Newcastle United: 2 (Elanga 15th, 28th), Barcelona win 8-3 on aggregate; Liverpool: 4 (Szoboszlai 25th, Ekitike 51st, Gravenberch 53rd, Salah 62nd) bt Galatasaray: 0, Liverpool win 4-1 on aggregate; Bayern Munich: 4 (Kane 25th, 54th, Karl 56th, Diaz 70th) bt Atalanta: 1 (Samardzic 85th), Bayern win 10-2 on aggregate; Tottenham Hotspur: 3 (Kolo Muani 30th, Simons 52nd, 90th) bt Atletico Madrid: 2 (Alvarez 47th, Hancko 75th), Atletico win 7-5 on aggregate.

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DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd.

Help them beat the heat...

It's easy to make summer safe for all. B S Manu Rao has some tips

The summer heat is on. And not all have the privilege of air conditioning and access to summer coolers. Here are a few things you can do to make life easier for some who need help to beat the heat.

Water station for the thirsty

Set up a water dispenser outside your house for those passing by to stop for a sip. Ensure it is secured from inside your compound. Provide a steel tumbler for those not carrying a bottle to help themselves to a drink. Keep it out of reach of animals. Clean both dispenser and tumbler at least twice a day to maintain hygiene.

Help for senior citizens

A neighbourhood help desk for seniors living alone will be of great help. Whether it's outdoor chores or visits to the bank, those in advanced years will find it difficult to move about outdoors in the harsh summer sun. Set up a group of volunteers who can attend to them, including visits to the doctor if needed.

Summer gear for those in need

There will be many around you who could use some summer gear such as a cap or even cotton clothes. Get a weekend mobilisation drive going to generate the funds for these accessories. People working outdoors such as gardeners can use the summer gear to protect themselves from the sun.

Save the saplings

Saplings planted recently need some care. Daily watering in the evenings with a check on the soil condition will help them grow into strong trees. Large trees also sustain many birds. A green neighbourhood is a healthier environment to live in. Those walking in the locality's parks can track the plants there through the summer.

Children falling prey to unusual viral fevers

Infections generally seen in winter are still seen though it's early summer. **Dr Radhakrishna Hegde S**, Lead Consultant and Head of Paediatrics, **Aster Women and Children Hospital**, has some advice

This season, paediatric departments in hospitals are witnessing a rise in viral fevers among children. While viral infections are common in children, during seasonal changes when the temperature fluctuates and there is increased exposure in schools and daycare centres, there is something different now.

First, what is a viral infection?

This is not a single disease but a term used to describe infections caused by various viruses such as influenza virus, adenovirus, enterovirus and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Symptoms often begin with sudden fever, which may be accompanied by running nose, cough, sore throat, headache, body ache, fatigue, vomiting or diarrhoea. In younger children, irritability, reduced appetite and sleep disturbances are also common.

Usually, viral infections are prevalent during winters. This year, we have noticed they are still around - especially the Influenza A and B viruses - even though it is early summer. Children are also coming in with hi-grade fever, headache, throat pain and body ache. These symptoms mimic Covid-19 symptoms and have viral ethology. Sometimes, along with the child the entire family has the symptoms. Earlier, we didn't see such incidences of viral infections around this time of the year.

Understandably, parents get anxious when their children's fever lasts for more than 4-5 days. The treatment comprises antipyretics such as paracetamol to control the fever. The child should be given plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

The main goals of treatment are reducing discomfort and preventing dehydration. Parents should ensure the child gets adequate rest and plenty of fluids such as water, oral rehydration solution, soup and fresh juice.

Preventive care

Preventive measures play a key role this season. Encouraging regular handwashing with soap, teaching children to cover their mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing, and avoiding close contact with

Dr Radhakrishna Hegde S

infected people can significantly reduce transmission. Good nutrition, adequate sleep and sufficient hydration strengthen the immune system.

Watch for warning signs

Parents should watch for warning signs that require immediate medical attention. These include high fever lasting more than three days, difficulty in breathing, persistent vomiting, severe headache, unusual drowsiness, seizures, rash with fever, signs of dehydration such as dry mouth, reduced urination, no tears while crying or if the child appears very ill.

Infants under three months with fever should always be evaluated by a doctor promptly.

Stay safe this season with proper care and timely treatment.

Head injury: A serious threat on the road

Road accidents causing head injuries lead to many unfortunate deaths and disabilities that could have been avoided, cautions **Dr Arun L Naik**, Senior Consultant Neurosurgeon, **Sagar Hospitals**

Head injuries are among the most serious consequences of road traffic accidents, particularly in India. Despite having only about one per cent of the world's vehicles, India contributes to nearly 10 per cent of global head injury cases, which is very alarming. Apart from fatalities, a large number of people are left with lifelong disabilities such as paralysis, speech impairment and cognitive deficits due to a head injury.

Types and causes

The most common cause of head injury is two-wheeler accidents. Contrary to popular belief, high-speed highway accidents are not the only concern. In fact, low-velocity accidents -occurring at speeds as low as 20–30 kmph - can be equally, if not more, dangerous due to direct impact on hard surfaces such as concrete road or pavement.

Alarmingly, nearly 80 per cent of head injuries occur within a five km radius from home. This is largely due to negligence - people often skip wearing a helmet for short distances, assuming safety. Children are especially vulnerable, frequently seen without helmets, either standing in front of the rider or seated unsecured, increasing the risk of severe injury.

Critical role of timely treatment

Time is the most crucial factor in managing head injuries. A simple way to assess severity is by checking responsiveness - if a victim cannot answer basic questions such as his/her name, it may indicate serious brain injury. Unconscious victims must never be given water, as this can lead to choking and death. Instead, the victim should be transported immediately to a hospital equipped with CT scan facilities and neurosurgical care.

Delays caused while shifting the accident victim between hospitals without proper infrastructure can cost precious hours - often the difference between life and death.

Advancements in treatment

Modern management of head injuries relies heavily on rapid imaging techniques such as CT scan and the availability of 24/7 neurosurgical care. Specialised trauma centres are equipped to diagnose internal bleeding, fracture and brain swelling quickly, enabling timely surgical or medical intervention. However, access to such facilities must be immediate to be effective.

Dr Arun L Naik

Importance of helmet, safety measures

Wearing a helmet is the single most effective way of preventing fatal head injuries. Full-face helmet with quality certification offers the best protection, especially at higher speeds. Even for city rides, a certified helmet with proper chin straps is essential.

Equally important is wearing seat belts - not just for the front-seat passenger but also for those in the back seat. Sudden braking can cause severe impact on the head even at low speeds.

Road safety must begin at home, with responsible behaviour setting the right example for the future generations.

Dos and don'ts in emergency situations

Bystanders play a vital role in the first response. Here are a few pointers to follow.

- Move the injured person to a safe place
- Use proper technique (log rolling) to avoid damage to spine - keep the body aligned while lifting
- Do not give food or water to an unconscious person
- Clear visible obstructions from the mouth gently
- Seek medical help immediately – delay means difference between life and death

Helping hand for animals

Many stray animals and birds fall prey to the harsh summer. Leave water outside your home for stray animals. A birdbath in your garden or on the roof is a welcome relief for feathered friends. You can form a neighbourhood group to share information on animals in distress and even set up a few feeding spots.

SUMMERSAULT CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL 2026

Experiencing Bengaluru through performing arts

This summer programme presented by **Prestige Centre for Performing Arts**, in collaboration with **Bangalore Theatre Company**, aims at helping children cultivate empathy, adaptability and the ability to listen and respond - qualities that continue to grow with them over time

This summer, the Prestige Centre for Performing Arts (PCPA), in collaboration with Bangalore Theatre Company, presents Summersault 2026, a 15-day performing arts summer programme for children aged 7–10 and 11–14, running from April 11 to April 26. Now in its second year, the programme builds on its vision of creating meaningful artistic experiences for young people. Centered on the theme 'Namma Ooru – Bengaluru', Summersault 2026 brings together artistic exploration and local context, helping children engage with the city in a way that is both creative and attuned to its stories, sounds and everyday rhythms.

Each day, from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm, children will be immersed in a rich mix of folk dance and music, storytelling, rhythm, clowning, improvisation, soundscapes and clay-based explorations. These activities are not just about learning an art form - they are designed to nurture imagination, build confidence and encourage children to think independently and express themselves freely. At a time when much of childhood is increasingly screen-bound, Summersault creates space for active, shared experiences. Through guided play and artistic exploration, children build communication skills and develop a deeper awareness of themselves and those around them. Along the way, they cultivate empathy, adaptability and the ability to listen and respond - qualities that continue to grow with them over time.

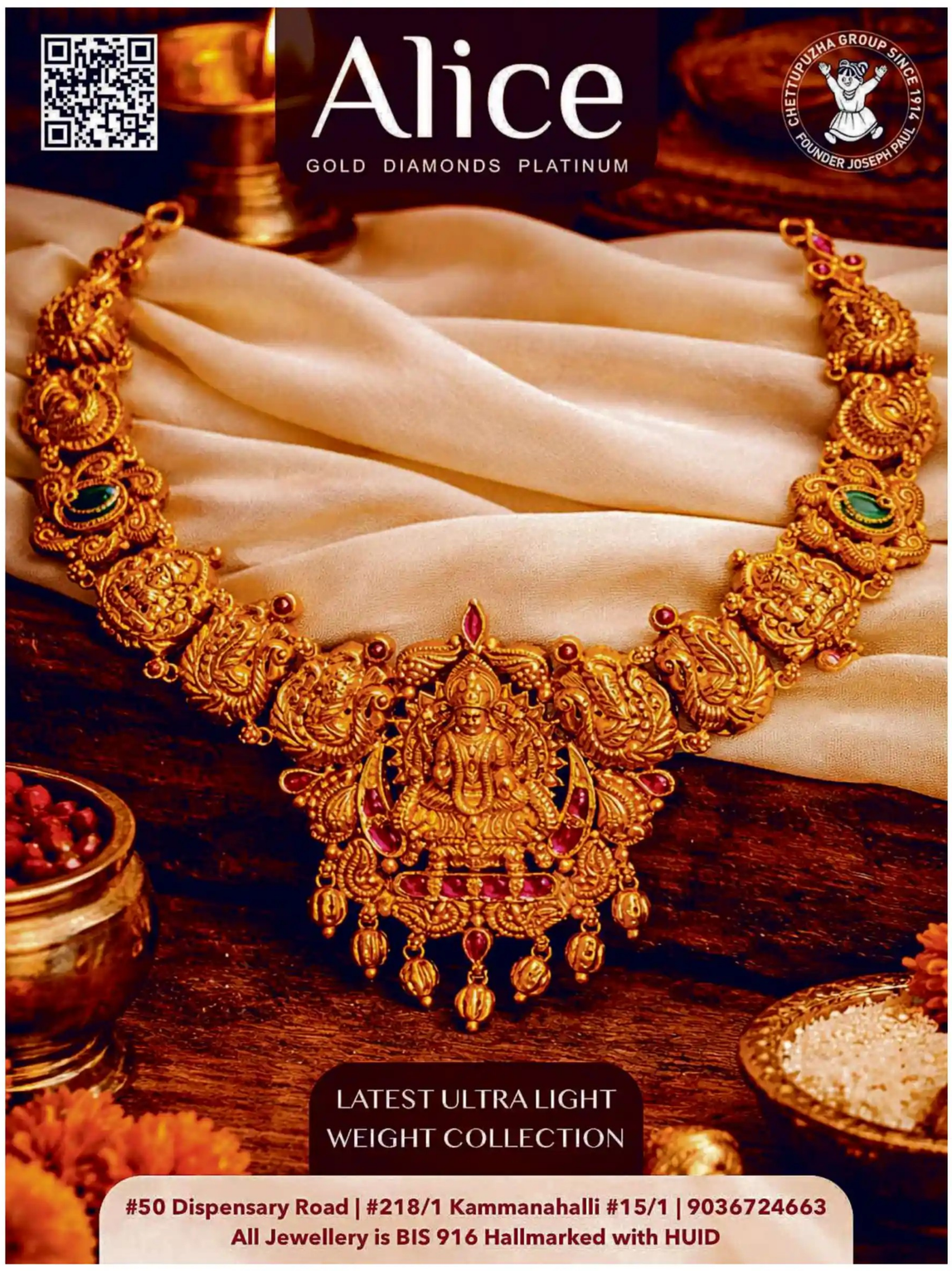
Throughout the programme, the children are guided by Gubbi - the sparrow, once a familiar presence in Bengaluru and now a gentle reminder of the city's changing landscape. As a playful companion and storyteller, Gubbi introduces them to local sounds, songs and stories, encouraging them to observe their surroundings closely and build a more personal, imaginative connection with the city.

The programme culminates with a special Sharing Day, where parents are invited to witness a glimpse of the children's journey. Rather than a performance focused on perfection, this becomes a celebration of process - of curiosity, courage and growth, where the children proudly share what they have explored, created and discovered over the two weeks.

Hosted at PCPA's state-of-the-art venue, Summersault 2026 is curated by Bangalore Theatre Company, known for the experiential learning pedagogy in their programmes, prioritising hands-on theatre training and creative expression. The Bangalore Theatre Company team - Arjun Kabbina, Chandrakeerthi and Preeti Desai - have dedicated the past decade to engaging children through theatre and education, fostering collaboration, confidence and storytelling skills. This one-of-a-kind summer school is brought to life by an exceptional collective of artists and facilitators comprising Lekha Naidu, Vasu Dixit, Rohini Raghunandan, Alaka Subrahmanya, SriHarsha, Sneha Kappanna, Swati Jain, Praveen Ram, Vrijulal M V, Gagan Kumar, Lavanthi Kumar and Aishwarya. Each of these artists brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to working with young people, making this a truly enriching and inspiring environment.

Registrations are now open with limited seats to ensure a focused and engaging experience for every participant.

Date: April 11 to 26, 2026
Time: 9.30 am to 1.30 pm
Venue: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts
Entry (limited seats): Book via BookMyShow to confirm your child's spot
For enquiries call: 99001 51383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Wknd. DELIGHT

Earlier in the day is the ideal time to eat a mango. It is a great mid-morning snack

EAT RIGHT

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

GOODNESS OF THE KING

Mango is commonly referred to as the king of fruits. Apart from being a sweet and juicy treat, it is known for its high nutritional value. It is rich in Vitamins A and C. It is also rich in fibre and is an antioxidant. Mango strengthens your immune system, is good for your eyes and helps prevent cell damage. It also aids digestion.

MIND THE PORTIONS

Mango contains natural sugar and those with diabetes need to track their consumption even though the fruit also has a high content of fibre that cuts the impact of the sugar. The benefits of mango can be realised with the right portion size. Also, avoid mangos that are over-ripe and those that have been artificially ripened. Consume in moderation.

Mango magic!

Deepa Natarajan Lobo has some recipes for a blast of mango flavour this season

A summer season is just not the same without the brightness of mangoes showing up everywhere, lifting up everything from your mood to your meals. Be it sweet and juicy, or tart and tangy, mangoes add a burst of goodness to any dish and can be slipped easily into salads, desserts and even savoury snacks.

Think about a zesty ceviche, a crisp kachori or a light custard tart, and a mango fits right in. Chefs are always coming up with new ways to showcase its deliciousness and share some lip-smacking mango-packed recipes that you can try at home this mango season.

Avocado and Mango Ceviche

By **S K ARSHAD ALI**, Senior Sous Chef

What you need
- Avocado – 350 gm, diced
- Ripe mango – 250 gm, diced
- Onion – 50 gm, finely chopped
- Jalapeno – 20 gm, diced
- Fresh coriander – two sprigs, finely chopped
- Lemon juice – three tablespoons
- Extra virgin olive oil – one tablespoon
- Black pepper – quarter teaspoon
- Salt – half teaspoon (or to taste)

Preparation

Mix the diced avocado and ripe mango in a chilled bowl. Add the onions, jalapeno and coriander. Add the lemon juice, olive oil and seasonings. Mix carefully so the avocado and mango pieces do not break. Chill for 10 minutes. Spread over tortillas or a slice of sourdough bread and consume fresh.

PIC COURTESY: MANNHEIM CRAFT BREWERY

Green Mango and Papaya Salad

By **PRASANTH**, Chef

What you need
- Half a cup each of green mango and raw papaya, cut into short thin strips
- Quarter cup of carrot, cut into short thin strips
- Quarter cup of haricot beans, diced and blanched
- Two cherry tomatoes, halved
- One tablespoon each of coriander leaves and scallions, chopped
- Half a tablespoon of mint, chopped
- Two tablespoons of roasted peanuts
- Half a teaspoon of dehydrated mango

For dressing:
- Half a cup of sugar
- One teaspoon each of bird's eye red chilli and chopped garlic
- 10 ml of synthetic vinegar
- 100 ml of water

Preparation of salad

Place the mango, papaya and carrot slices in ice cold water to keep them crisp. Blanch the haricot beans briefly in boiling water.

Preparation of dressing

Combine sugar, chilli, garlic, vinegar and water in a saucepan. Simmer for about 10–15 minutes until slightly thickened. Allow the dressing to cool completely.

Assembling salad

Remove the vegetables from the cold water and squeeze out excess moisture. In a mixing bowl, combine the vegetables, dressing, cherry tomatoes and blanched beans. Add scallions, coriander and mint, and toss well so the dressing coats the vegetables.

Top with roasted peanuts and dehydrated mango before serving.

PIC COURTESY: FOMO

Aam Khasta Kachori

PIC COURTESY: RAJDHANI

What you need
- For dough:
- Two cups of refined wheat flour (maida)
- Four tablespoons of ghee
- Salt to taste
- One cup of water

For filling:
- Half a cup of split moong dal
- Half a tablespoon of fennel seeds
- One tablespoon each of cumin seeds, red chilli powder, gram flour (besan), sugar and oil
- A pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- Half a tablespoon each of turmeric powder and crushed black pepper
- Salt to taste
- 100 ml of aam ras or mango puree

Preparation - dough

Mix flour, ghee and salt in a bowl. Add water gradually and knead into a firm dough. Cover and let the dough rest for 30 minutes.

Preparation - filling

Heat oil in a pan and add cumin and fennel seeds for tempering. Add gram flour and turmeric powder and roast lightly for 2–3 minutes. Add the remaining spices and ingredients, and cook for five minutes until well-combined. Remove from heat and allow the mixture to cool to room temperature.

Assembling kachoris

Divide the dough into 10 equal portions and shape into balls. Flatten each ball slightly and create a small cavity in the centre. Fill the cavity with the prepared stuffing, seal the edges and flatten gently again. Fry in medium-hot oil until golden brown and crisp.

Garnish with roasted chana dal, green chutney, nylon sev, tamarind chutney and chopped onions. Serve hot with aam ras.

Mango Almond Custard Tart

By **DILKUSH RATHORE**, Pastry Chef

What you need
- Two and quarter cups of refined flour
- One-third cup of salt
- Two-third cup of butter
- Half a cup of castor sugar
- Three tablespoons of milk
- One teaspoon of lime zest

For mango almond filling:
- 100 ml of almond milk
- One tablespoon of custard powder
- One and a half tablespoons of castor sugar
- Two-third cup of whipping cream
- Three tablespoons of fresh mango puree

For topping:
- Two cups of fresh mango, sliced
- Two tablespoons of microgreens

Preparation - tart base

Cream the butter and castor sugar lightly until combined. Add flour, salt and lime zest, and mix gently. Add milk gradually and bring the mixture together to form a soft dough. Wrap the dough and refrigerate for 30–40 minutes.

Roll out the chilled dough and line a tart or pie mould. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 170-degree C for 20–25 minutes until light golden. Allow it to cool completely.

Preparation - filling

In a saucepan, cook the almond milk, castor sugar and custard powder while stirring until the mixture thickens. Allow the custard to cool completely. Whip the cream until soft peaks form. Mix the mango puree with the cooled custard and gently fold into the whipped cream.

Assembling of tart

Remove the cooled tart shell from the mould and place it on a serving platter. Fill it with the mango almond custard mixture and spread evenly. Chill for 15–20 minutes to allow the filling to set.

Arrange sliced mango on top in a rosette pattern, garnish with microgreens and serve.

PIC COURTESY: THE DEN, BENGALURU

LEISURE

Beetle Bailey

YOU NEED TO SHAPE UP OR SHIP OUT!
I HAVE A CHOICE?
IF IT'S A CRUISE SHIP, I'LL TAKE IT!
GREG + MORT WALKER
1/15
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JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

GRIET

BOOWX

MGAANE

TQAEEU

WILCO
So I guess you won't be rushing a fraternity this year?
"I REFUSE TO JOIN ANY CLUB THAT WOULD HAVE ME AS A MEMBER"
Groucho
You got that right!
GROUCHO'S "I REFUSE TO JOIN ANY CLUB THAT WOULD HAVE ME AS A MEMBER" WAS IN ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @Play Jumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

"_____"

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Answers: TIGER OXBOW MANAGE EQUATE
Groucho's "I refuse to join any club that would have me as a member" was in — QUOTATION "MARK"

HITORI-138

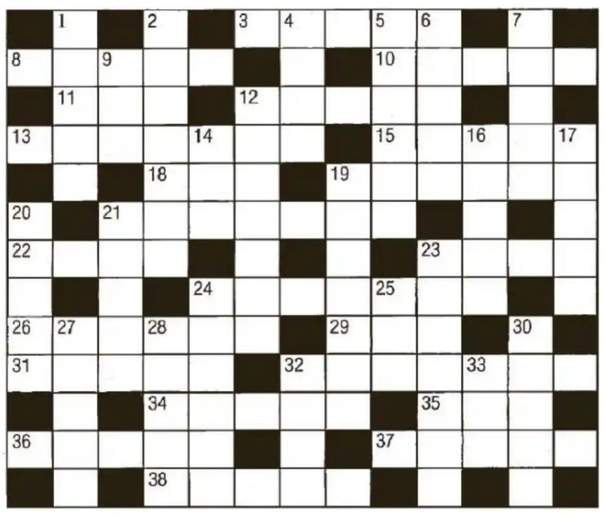
7	7	1	8	2	6	8	3
7	3	8	8	7	4	6	2
8	6	3	5	4	1	1	8
1	5	2	8	6	7	3	4
4	1	5	7	1	3	5	6
3	3	6	1	7	8	2	8
6	8	1	3	1	2	7	5
8	2	4	3	8	8	3	8

SOLUTION for HITORI-138

■	3	■	8	■	4	2	■
6	■	8	3	1	2	7	5
3	■	6	1	7	8	2	■
4	1	■	7	■	3	5	6
1	5	2	■	6	7	■	4
■	6	3	5	4	■	1	8
7	3	■	8	■	4	6	2
■	7	1	■	2	6	8	3

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 139



EASY

ACROSS
3 Jinx (5)
8 Mother-of-pearl (5)
10 Holy book (5)
11 Expression of disapproval (3)
12 Happen (5)
13 King (7)
15 Antitoxin (5)
18 Speck (3)
19 Next to (6)
21 Recollects (7)
22 Religious image (4)
23 Remainder (4)
24 Teeters (7)
26 Achieve (6)
29 Piece (3)
31 Tree sap (5)
32 Withdraws (7)
34 Scornful expression (5)
35 Horse (3)
36 Cotton thread (5)
37 Sucrose (5)
38 Wear away (5)

DOWN
1 Wooden shoe (5)
2 Widen (7)
4 Cry of pain (4)
5 Maltreats (6)
6 Employs (5)
7 Nimbus, for example (5)
9 Swindle (3)
12 Eight-sided figure (7)
14 Legendary bird (3)
16 Ceremonies (5)
17 Thaws (5)
19 Chatter (7)
20 Panatella (5)
21 Origins (5)
23 Entourage (7)
24 Victor (6)
25 Illuminated (3)
27 Lukewarm (5)
28 Gangway (5)
30 Lawful (5)
32 Rip (4)
33 Torn cloth (3)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 Munch away at a piece of biscuit (5)
8 Sound means of detecting arson? (5)
10 A little lamb, or a growling layabout? (5)
11 Wherein the wine bottles can get dust on (3)
12 Se a flier as a criminal (5)
13 Louts do possibly get betrayed (4,3)
15 Deliveries too far out (5)
18 Started smoking, perhaps (3)
19 As worn by a drunken peer touring the UK? (6)
21 Save, only to have over? (7)
22 American style bonnet (4)
23 Where ales are brewed in Greater Manchester (4)
24 To keep the French in sight requires a certain skill (7)
26 Fib about a fathead (female) (6)
29 Insecure mutt? (3)
31 Let go without payment of even an old penny! (5)
32 Kind of ice-cream van with foreign articles on (7)
34 Get ready to eat, perhaps (5)
35 Silly fellow lacking wit (3)
36 As a rule, it heartens the foreigner (5)
37 Shooting without killing, involving traps (5)
38 Where, in Surrey, to have ham with some eggs (5)

DOWN
1 Root out a bighead - that unfeeling fellow (5)
2 Dealt with by the worker who came to the fore (7)
4 Short dog with a trouble-free tail (4)
5 Turn up in the part of a werewolf, making a bloomer (6)
6 Holy man very honest about finishing work (5)
7 Backwater with many a smell (5)
9 There's nothing in raising a blind (3)
12 Skinny but attractive girl, about a hundred pounds (7)
14 A well drilled product? (3)
16 Cash contribution to education (5)
17 Skinhead still very young (5)
19 Creature imaginably crossed with a dog? (7)
20 Quiet pixie on the ledge (5)
21 Many a stream of water will put a fire out (5)
23 Shows fear of psychiatrists (7)
24 Branch of the railway taking up arms (6)
25 "Rod" is the name for a good French one (3)
27 Equipped for half a year at sea? (5)
28 Russian dress material? (5)
30 Make a later revision (5)
32 Silver and gold are too much for her (4)
33 Be prone to deceive (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 139

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 3, Sc-off 8, sonar 10, La-rr-y 11, Bin 12, C-rook 13, Sold out 15, Wides 18, Lit 19, Per-UK-e 21, Deliver 22, Hood 23, Sale 24, S-le-ight 26, L-ass-ie 29, Cur 31, Free-d 32, Van-il-la 34, Risen 35, Nit(-wit) 36, Reign 37, Skeet 38, Eg-ham.
DOWN: 1, Ro-b-ot 2, Hand-led 4, Cur-t 5, Flower (rev.) 6, Fa-k-ir 7, C-reek 9, Nil (rev.) 12, Cut(-CL-e 14, Oil 16, Ducat 17, S-even 19, Pelican (crossing) 20, Sh-elf 21, D-Ouse 23, Shrinks 24, Sliding 25, G-un 27, Ar-Med 28, Serge 30, Alter 32, Vera 33, Lie.

EASY
ACROSS: 3, Jonah 8, Nacre; 10, Bible 11, Boo 12, Occur 13, Monarch 15, Serum 18, Dot 19, Beside 21, Recalls 22, Icon 23, Rest 24, Woobles 26, Attain 29, Bit 31, Resin 32, Retires 34, Sneer 35, Nag 36, Lisle 37, Sugar; 38, Erode.
DOWN: 1, Sabot 2, Broaden 4, Ouch 5, Abuses 6, Hires 7, Cloud 9, Con 12, Octagon 14, Roc 16, Rites 17, Melts 19, Blabber 20, Cigar 21, Roots 23, Retinue 24, Winner 25, Lit 27, Tepid 28, Aisle 30, Legal 32, Rend 33, Rag.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. VARIETY

File your nails gently only in one direction. Filing up and down vigorously weakens them

NAIL CARE

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

LIMIT WATER EXPOSURE

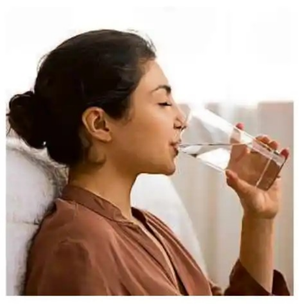
While it's good to wash your hands often in the summer months to prevent the common infections that go around, prolonged exposure to water isn't good for your nails. It weakens your nails. Ensure you dry your nails soon after sustained exposure to water.

HEALTHY DIET

Nails too need nourishment. Go for a diet rich in proteins, iron, omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins. Leafy greens, citrus fruits and nuts should be a part of your diet through the summer months for strong nails. Avoid sugary foods.

Nail It

Stay well-hydrated



Yes, your nails too need hydration as much as the rest of you. This is especially so in the hot summer days. Not drinking enough fluids will impact your nails too, making them brittle and prone to chipping. If you have long nails, ensure they too are well-hydrated in summer.

Moisturise cuticles daily

You need to use a light moisturiser or oil for your cuticles every day. This will prevent dryness and ensure they don't crack. Cuticles cracking will be painful when touched by any surface. A moisturiser daily will help prevent it.

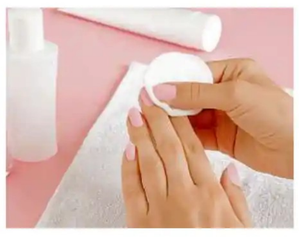
SUNSCREEN ON HANDS

While you apply sunscreen daily on your face and arms, don't forget your fingernails. UV rays of the sun damage your nails as much as the skin. Use a sunscreen with SPF of over 30 on your nails daily before leaving home. This is even more important if you spend time outdoors exposed to the sun.

AVOID HARSH DETERGENTS

It is never a good idea to expose your nails to harsh detergents and chemicals used for cleaning. If you are using them, wear gloves. Don't let these harsh chemicals come in contact with your nails, especially every day during unavoidable chores at home.

Use gentle remover



If you like nail polish in different colours through the week, ensure you use a gentle nail polish remover always. Go for an acetone-free nail polish remover to prevent excessive drying. It is a good idea to give nail polish a break at least on two days of the week through the summer months.

India's fashion on the global red carpet

Indian fashion, rooted in craftsmanship and heritage, is a global defining force now, writes **Prasad Bidapa**

Fashion Notes

The global red carpet has undergone a quiet, yet powerful transformation - one where Indian fashion is no longer a cultural curiosity, but a defining force. From couture gowns to heirloom jewellery, India's design language is now embedded in the vocabulary of international glamour.

At platforms such as the Oscars, Indian designers have begun to shape the narrative with authority. Couturiers such as Rahul Mishra and Anamika Khanna are no longer confined to Indian runways - they are dressing global celebrities with pieces rooted in craftsmanship and storytelling. Rahul Mishra's intricate embroidery and Nature-inspired motifs have found favour with international stars, reflecting a deeper appreciation for slow fashion and artisanal excellence. Similarly, Anamika Khanna's structured, yet fluid silhouettes, have appeared on Hollywood red carpets, blending Indian textile sensibilities with contemporary tailoring.

The 2026 Academy Awards marked a significant milestone. Indian designers including Sabyasachi and Gaurav Gupta dressed global celebrities, with their work celebrated for merging heritage craftsmanship with high fashion drama. Jewellery, in particular, became a standout - Sabyasachi's gemstone-rich creations adorned Rachel McAdams, signalling a shift where Indian jewellery is now seen as global luxury, not just ethnic adornment.

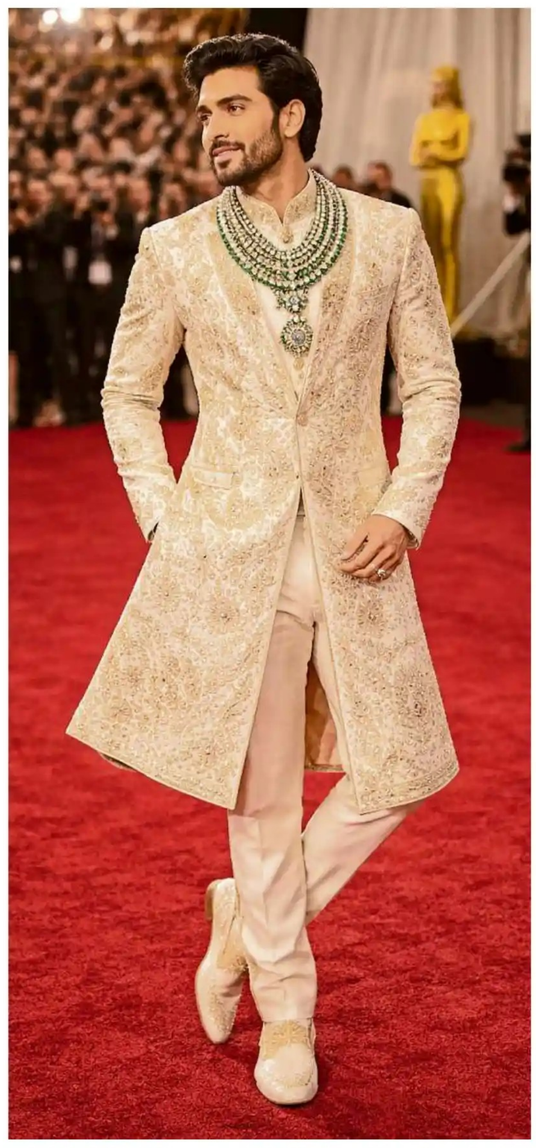
Equally noteworthy is the rise of Indian luxury patrons as global taste-makers. At the Oscars, handcrafted Indian jewellery and textiles were showcased prominently, reinforcing India's position as a source of refined, heritage luxury.

Beyond designers and patrons, Indian models and personalities have played a crucial role in this evolution. From Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's early dominance at Cannes and the Oscars to Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Deepika Padukone's continued presence, Indian representation has steadily moved from participation to influence.

What distinguishes India's red carpet moment is not just visibility, but identity. Unlike homogenised global fashion, Indian design carries a distinct narrative - of handloom traditions, intricate embroidery and cultural symbolism. Designers such as Manish Malhotra have further amplified this by dressing international celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez and Rihanna, integrating Indian aesthetics into global pop culture seamlessly.

Today, the red carpet is no longer a Western stage with occasional Indian appearances. It is a shared global platform, and India, with its heritage, craftsmanship and evolving luxury voice, is firmly at the centre of it.

PICS COURTESY: NAGENDRA PRASAD



Tan is actually a response to injury

Dr Mukta Sachdev, dermatologist, explains how you can protect yourself from the harmful effects of the harsh summer sun

Summer Care

The sun is the most hardworking (and often underestimated) factor influencing your skin. With summer having set in and UV indices climbing, especially in cities such as Bengaluru, skin concerns like tanning, irritation and sensitivity become even more common.

Many people come in with similar concerns this time of the year. "My skin has become darker," "It feels dull," and "Why is my pigmentation worsening?" In most cases, unprotected sun exposure is the underlying cause.

People often think of a tan as harmless, even desirable. But medically speaking, a tan is not a glow - it's a response to injury. When ultraviolet (UV) rays hit the skin, they stimulate melanocytes to produce more melanin. This pigment rises to the surface to protect deeper layers. That visible darkening is essentially your skin trying to defend itself.

In Indian skin, which already has higher melanin, this response shows up more as tanning than redness. That's why many people say, "I don't burn." True, but that doesn't mean there's no damage.

UV exposure quietly affects DNA, accelerates collagen breakdown and worsens pigmentation disorders such as melasma and post-acne marks - conditions frequently managed in clinical practice.

A quick reality check, specialists often ask patients to 'compare your forearms to your upper arms or your face to the area under your chin'. The difference is usually quite striking. Sun-exposed areas tend to be darker, a little rougher, sometimes with uneven patches. Covered areas? More even, smoother and closer to your natural skin tone.

Even within the face, the story is the same. The forehead, nose and cheekbones - your 'sun-catching zones' - are often darker than the sides of the face. Over time, the sun literally maps itself onto your skin.

Summer also brings another layer of concern - skin irritation. High UV exposure can weaken the skin barrier, leading to redness, sensitivity and that familiar 'burning' or tight feeling, especially if you're outdoors for long hours. Now, the good news. This is one of the easiest things to prevent.

A good broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher, with strong UVA protection) is your daily essential - like brushing your teeth. Apply it every morning, and yes, even if you're mostly indoors. Reapply if you're out and about.

But sunscreen alone isn't enough. Think of sun protection as a team effort. Add a wide-brimmed hat when you can, wear sunglasses that block UV (your eyes and the delicate skin around them will thank you), and opt for full sleeves or tightly woven fabrics if you're outdoors for long hours. Even something as simple as choosing the shaded side of the street or carrying an umbrella can make a difference over time.

At the end of the day, living in India means we can't - and shouldn't - avoid the sun. But we can outsmart it. A little consistency, a few smart habits and your skin won't have to 'work overtime' defending itself. And if there's one takeaway every summer, it's this - your best skin tone isn't lighter, it's your natural tone, just well-protected.

All set for summer?

Jayanthi Madhukar lists out three summer essentials you need

Summer Ready

Shorts

Shorts are casual, but when paired with a light jacket, they can easily pass the smart-casual test. Denim shorts are versatile and work well with a basic T-shirt, tank top or button-down shirt. Linen shorts pair beautifully with crop tops and blouses.

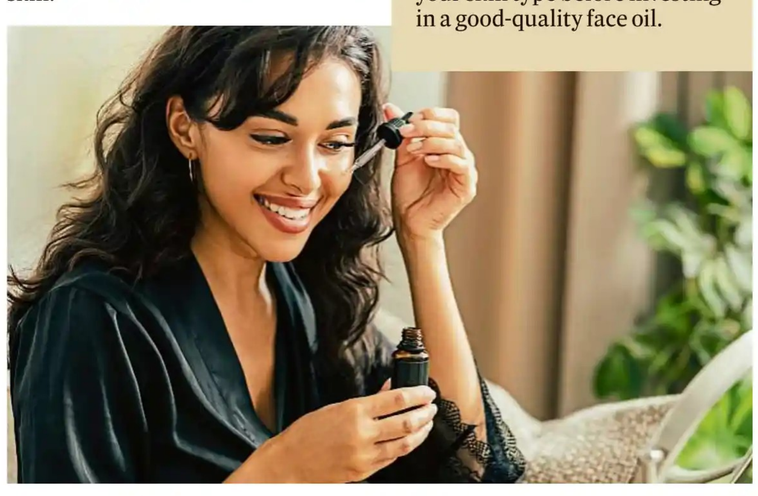
At the more formal end of the spectrum, tailored shorts can be styled with a tucked-in shirt or blouse. Add a light blazer, if needed, to complete the look. This ensemble pairs well with loafers or espadrilles for a polished appearance.

Maxi slip dress

When we talk about sandals, a slip dress is never far behind. Comfortable, cool and airy, especially those with slender straps, slip dresses move beautifully when you walk. Cotton and linen fabrics are perfect for summer, while a silk slip dress not only looks elegant but can also feel surprisingly cool against the skin.

Face oil

Summer can be harsh on the skin, especially the face. Keeping it moisturised without feeling sweaty can be achieved with a lightweight face oil. Choose one that is light, non-greasy, non-comedogenic and nutrient-rich to maintain a healthy glow. Always consider your skin type before investing in a good-quality face oil.



DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. LEISURE

If stress is affecting your sleep and appetite, and thus impacting your health, you should seek help

BEAT STRESS

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

STRESS HARMS HEALTH

Over time, stress can impact your health adversely in many ways. A major long-term concern is prolonged stress will increase blood pressure. This in turn leads to heart-related health issues and increases the risk of stroke and other complications arising from high blood pressure. Stress has to be managed early.

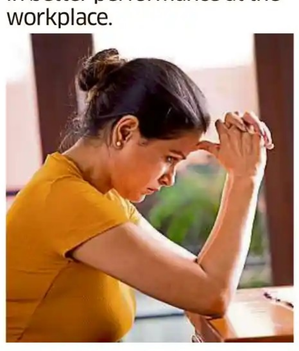
STRESS IMPACTS WELL BEING

Over time, stress weakens the body's defence mechanism. You are then prone to infections. Stress also causes conditions such as anxiety, depression and irritability, and this leads to poor concentration and focus on work. So, stress has many adverse effects on both health and well-being.

Stress **Busters**

Fear of burnout?

Many people find it difficult to cope with workplace stress. Hectic lifestyle, unrealistic targets and pressure all the time can lead to a burnout. The key is in learning to manage stress effectively as it can never be avoided. Managing stress also helps in better performance at the workplace.



DEEP BREATHING HELPS

When you are stressed, pause and concentrate on your breathing. The 4-4-4 technique helps you relax immediately. Just inhale slowly for four seconds, hold your breath for four seconds and then exhale slowly for four seconds. Repeat this a few times. It gives you that minute's respite you need.

EXERCISE DAILY

There's nothing like a gym session before or after work daily. If you are in a stressful job, exercise is just the antidote you need. It takes your mind off the stress, boosts your mood with the release of endorphins and gives you the physical fitness you need for a rigorous daily routine.

Sleep well

You need at least seven hours of good sleep every night. Sleep deprivation leads to many health issues. It causes irritability, hampers sustained focus and reduces the ability to cope with stress and work-related pressures. It also has an adverse impact on relationships.

SPEND TIME OUTDOORS

Set aside some me-time at least every second day to spend in a garden or park near your home. Don't attend to the phone and take your mind off work and stressful tasks while on your break. The outdoors, especially greenery, is known to lower the stress hormone level in the body and elevate your mood.

Show Buzz | Mohit Rajkumar Shastry

'I am a perpetual student of music...'

A popular figure on Mumbai's vibrant concert circuit, music flows through **Mohit Rajkumar Shastry** naturally. A gifted flautist, composer, arranger and conductor, he carries forward a rich legacy as a third-generation musician, drawing inspiration from his grandmother and father who were gifted in music. Mohit, at 10 years of age, was inspired by a flute vendor playing a popular tune and persuaded his father to buy him one. The instrument has remained with him ever since, producing melodies that continue to captivate his fans.

As he surges ahead in his musical journey, he takes time off for this chat with **B S Manu Rao**

How did you get into music?
There was always a musically-nourishing environment at home. My father used to play his favourite songs on the tape recorder and often sing along too. My grandmother used to play the veena and my paternal aunts were trained in classical music. When I was 10, my father taught me some basic sargams and a bandish in Raag Bhoopali on the harmonium. Gradually, I started picking up and playing tunes of some old Hindi film songs on my own.

What is your calling - flautist, arranger, composer or music conductor?
These are all designations which have only facilitated my expression of music. As a flautist, I am usually absorbed in pitching a note correctly or trying to replicate a certain piece of music with utmost precision with a view to justifying the original creation. As an arranger, I am always focussed on tapping into my creative side and coming up with original ideas. As a conductor, I am driven by the urge to have a performance executed to perfection by an orchestra. I reckon composing on a totally different level. Deep down within my heart, I know that above all these, I am a perpetual student of music.

What inspires you while playing the flute?
Musicians of yesteryears put in their sweat and toil to bring a song into existence, knowing very well that their names and personal contributions would be restricted to within the walls of the studio. It is the passion, hard work and skill of all those people that inspires me while pitching every single note. I believe that while preparing for a show, and by practising old film songs to the best of my ability, I can show respect for their work. It is my way of expressing gratitude and appreciation towards their contribution.

For a creative person, how important is family support?
Creativity cannot happen without family support. I often say I am what I am because of two women in my life - my mother and my wife. There was never a time when I had to worry about housework. Hence, I could devote valuable hours to my vocation. Even when I began as a musician, I had my parents' support. Jay, my son, assists me too in my creative ventures. Creativity happens only when you don't have to worry about running the household.

What's on the cards?
I want to evolve as a better musician, a better human being. People say music is a means to connect to the Supreme. I want to reach that state. I want to move away from the hustle and bustle of today's world and practise in seclusion, where I am not expected to deliver a performance to impress or entertain.

Yoga with gym cuts risk of injury

Yoga therapist **Krupa Patel** has three yoga asanas you can include with your gym regimen to enhance flexibility

Are you working out in the gym daily, pushing weights in an intense regimen? It is always a good idea to add on a few yoga exercises too. Yoga is known to strengthen the joints and improve flexibility, thus reducing risk of injury. The asanas also enhance muscle recovery and thus complement the intense gym work-outs. Deep breathing relaxes the mind, much needed after strenuous activities and stressful days.

Warm-up before gym: Tiger Pose

Begin with hands and knees on the ground in a table-top position. As you inhale, lift your left leg up, bent at the knee, with your foot pointing up. As you exhale, bring your knee back to the ground. Repeat with the right leg. Do a few repetitions.

This asana improves flexibility of your spine. It stretches the entire body gently, warming up the muscles and joints.

In the middle of gym routine: Warrior Pose

Stand with your feet wide apart. Stretch out your arms at shoulder level. Turn your right foot outwards and bend your right knee. Hold the pose for a few seconds, breathing deeply. Repeat with the left leg. Do this a few times.

This asana helps you build strength, increases your endurance and gives you more stability.

After gym: Cobra Pose

Lie down on your stomach. Place your palms on the ground next to your chest at shoulder level. As you inhale, raise your upper body, and as you exhale, come back onto the floor. Repeat a few times.

This asana releases the tension from your spine and hips after a heavy lower body workout. It also acts as a restorative pose for your abdominal and chest muscles after an intense abs workout and push-ups.

Cool on a hot day!

Summer **Sips**

Jayanthi Madhukar has two summer cooler recipes that will help you beat the heat

Kokum Sharbat

What you need:
- One cup each of dried kokum and sugar or jaggery (according to taste)
- 2-3 cups of hot water (to soak the kokum)
- One teaspoon each of roasted cumin powder and black salt
- Half a teaspoon of cardamom powder
- A pinch of black pepper powder

Preparation:
Rinse and soak the kokum in hot water overnight. Next day, blend the softened kokum into a soft paste. Strain the paste through a fine mesh strainer and discard the pulp. Pour the strained kokum extract and the rest of the ingredients into a pan and heat it on medium flame stirring the juice continuously until the sugar or jaggery dissolves. Simmer the extract for about 10 minutes until it becomes slightly thick and sticky. Take it off the heat and let it cool completely.

Refrigerate the syrup after transferring it into a glass bottle. When needed, put 2-3 teaspoons of the syrup into a glass and top it with cold soda or water. Add ice cubes and garnish with a few mint leaves.

Rose Milk

What you need
For rose syrup (homemade):
- Two cups each of sugar, water and edible rose petals (fresh or dried)
- Two teaspoons of rose water or half a teaspoon of rose essence
- A few drops of pink food colour
- One tablespoon of lime juice

Preparation:
Combine water and rose petals and bring to boil. Simmer until the water becomes a little dark and aromatic. Strain the water through a fine mesh sieve into a clean saucepan and add the sugar. Let it boil until the sugar dissolves. Now, simmer the water until it becomes thick and sticky. Add the rose flavouring and the food colour. Switch off the heat and add the lime juice. Let the syrup cool completely. Pour the syrup into a sterilised bottle or jar and refrigerate it.

(Note: You can even use store-bought syrup)

For rose milk:
- Two cups of chilled milk (optional – pre-boiled)
- Four tablespoons of rose syrup
- One teaspoon of sugar (optional)

Combine all the ingredients in a pitcher. Add rose water to enhance the taste. Pour into glasses and serve the rose milk with ice.

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I, **Maulya Reddy M,** R/at Kenkere, Kachamachenahalli, Kenkere, Chickballapura Dist. have lost my Original Marks Card of ICSE (Class-X) Year 2022, Bearing Unique ID 7608015, from Vivekananda School, Bengaluru. While travelling. **Finders Contact: 96112 75666**

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **R KUMAR,** residing at No. 38, New Binmangala 100 Feet Road, Indiranagar, Bengaluru-560038, have changed our minor Son's name from **LEO STEVEN K** to **SAMRUDH K** vide affidavit dated 20-03-2026 before notary Udaya Kumar K, Bengaluru

I, CHIPPADA VEERA VENKATA SUBBARAO S/O SATYAM, aged 60 years residing at B602 Keya Around The Life Seegehalli Bangalore 560067 have changed my name as CHIPPAADA V V SUBBARAO as per affidavit dated 17.03.2026 issued by Notary Ranjana S M.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **DIVYA REDDIGARI** and **DIVYA R REDDY,** residing at No. A-412, VRR Heritage Apart., Doddanekundi, Marathahalli, Bengaluru- 560037, declare that the above name pertain to me only. Henceforth I shall be known as **DIVYA R REDDY**, vide affidavit dated 19-03-2026 before notary K.V. Jagannath Reddy, Bengaluru.

I LJÓMA Beauty (OPC) Private Limited located at No. S05, Kastle Grace Apartment, 15th Cross, Eshwara Layout, Indiranagar, Hal 2nd Stage, Bangalore- 560038 have changed the registered office address to B- 51, Campton Estate, Kamyana, Shimla, 1710006 with effect from 10/03/2026.

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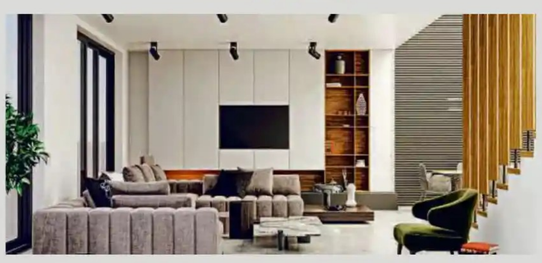

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